DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 337 184 IR 053 761

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|---|---|
| TITLE | Imagination and the Magic of Libraries. |
| INSTITUTION | New York State Library, Albany. |
| REPORT NO | ISSN-0006-7407 |
| PUB DATE | 90 |
| NOTE | 83p.; For the Summer 1990 issue, see ED 331 520. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Documents/Gift and Exchange, New York State Library, Albany, New York 12230 ($15.00/year). |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Serials (022) |
| JOURNAL CIT | The Bookmark; v49 n1 Fall 1990 |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC04 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Childrens Libraries; *Childrens Literature; Childrens Television; Creative Thinking; Fantasy; Fiction; *Imagination; *Library Role; *Library Services; Literacy; Poetry; Programing (Broadcast); *Reading Programs |

ABSTRACT

This issue of "The Bookmark" presents 20 articles focusing on the theme that libraries foster imagination. The articles are: (1) "Imagination and the Magic of Libraries" (Elizabeth S. Manion); (2) "Powerful Partners--Discovery and Democracy, An Interview with Cynthia Jenkins" (Anne E. Simon); (3) "Fostering Imagination in Children" (Susan Lehr); (4) "Imagination Initiatives--A Parent's Point of View" (Irene Rosenthal); (5) "A Reader Remembers" (Harriet Langsam Sobol); (6) "Parents As Reading Partners: A Positive Approach" (Marguerite D. Lewis); (7) "Potential for Partnership--What's Right with TV?" (Nancy M. Rubery); (8) "'Imagine If...'--An Appreciation of the Performing Arts as an Enhancement to Reading" (Sheldon L. Tarakan); (9) "Reaching Out To Capture Young Minds" (Ellen V. LiBretto); (10) "Setting the Stage" (Sharon Breen); (11) "Worth a Thousand Words" (Dave Ross); (12) "Magic Mirrors" (Bruce Coville); (13) "Poetry: The Color of Wonders'" (Susan A. Katz); (14) "Imagination, A Dream" (Bruce Degen); (15) "Curiousity Canceled" (Stephanie S. Tolan); (16) "Learning Through Immersion" (Valorie J. Beard); (17) "Summer Reading Programs--Deadly or Dynamic?" (Carolyn Travers); (18) "To Live the Language--A Writer's View of Creative Literacy" (Michael Rutherford); (19) "The Imagination Celebration and The Magic of Books'" (Vivienne Anderson); and (20) "It's Your Library:.Into the Future!" (Kathleen Connors). Also included is a report on the New York State Library in 1990. (MAB)

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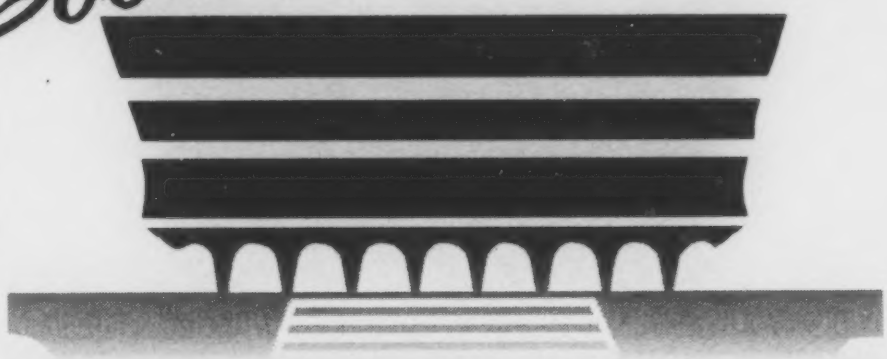

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## Imagination and the Magic of Libraries

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**IMAGINATION AND THE MAGIC OF LIBRARIES**

**Volume 49 – Number 1**
**Fall 1990**

**ISSN 0006-7407**

**Editors**
Joseph F. Shubert and
E. J. Josey

**Issued quarterly by The State Education Department, New York State Library, Albany. Sent on exchange to libraries. Individual subscriptions within the United State, Canada and Mexico are $15.00 a year; $4.00 a copy. Annual subscriptions outside of the United States, Canada and Mexico are $20.00; $8.00 a copy. Subscriptions are available from Documents/Gift and Exchange, New York State Library, Albany, New York 12230. Make checks payable to *New York State Library*.**

***The Bookmark* is indexed in *Library Literature*, *Public Affairs Information Service* and *CALL* (Current Awareness - Library Literature).**

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# The Bookmark

## CONTENTS

2 Imagination and the Magic of Libraries *By Elizabeth S. Manion*

4 Powerful Partners — Discovery and Democracy, An Interview with Cynthia Jenkins *By Anne E. Simon*

9 Fostering Imagination in Children *By Susan Lehr*

14 Imagination Initiatives — A Parent's Point of View *By Irene Rosenthal*

17 A Reader Remembers *By Harriet Langsam Sobol*

18 Parents As Reading Partners: A Positive Approach *By Marguerite D. Lewis*

21 Potential for Partnership — What's Right With TV? *By Nancy M. Rubery*

24 "Imagine If..." — An Appreciation of the Performing Arts as an Enhancement to Reading *By Sheldon L. Tarakan*

27 Reaching Out to Capture Young Minds *By Ellen V. LiBretto*

29 Setting the Stage *By Sharon Breen*

33 Worth a Thousand Words *By Dave Ross*

35 Magic Mirrors *By Bruce Coville*

37 Poetry: "The Color of Wonders" *By Susan A. Katz*

40 Imagination, A Dream *by Bruce Degen*

43 Curiosity Canceled *By Stephanie S. Tolan*

45 Learning Through Immersion *By Valorie J. Beard*

47 Summer Reading Programs — Deadly or Dynamic? *By Carolyn Travers*

51 To Live the Language — A Writer's View of Creative Literacy *By Michael Rutherford*

53 The Imagination Celebration and "The Magic of Books" *By Vivienne Anderson*

58 It's Your Library: Into the Future! *By Kathleen Connors*

60 The New York State Library: 1990

# IMAGINATION AND THE MAGIC OF LIBRARIES

*Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world.* — Albert Einstein

Our ability to unlock the imagination of our youth is the key to our greatness as a society.

All children are by nature curious, possess a sense of wonder, often look at the commonplace in a different light and, at an early age, believe that they can be or do anything in the world. To extend this enthusiasm and to keep the flame of American ingenuity burning brightly we must help creativity flourish by nurturing a child's imagination. We can help in broadening our children's horizons by fostering self-esteem and self-confidence, providing a landscape that is both latitudinal and longitudinal, encouraging exploration and experiment, and furnishing an exposure to a wide variety of experiences.

Creative power is unleashed with the ability to understand and appreciate the imaginative creations of others, the ability to develop resourcefulness in dealing with new or unusual experiences, the power to form mental images of what is not actually present and the development of new images or ideas fostered by combining diverse experiences. Some of the most important creative power brokers in our society are parents, teachers, writers, artists and librarians who should all be working in concert to discover how to open the door to each child's individual artistic inventiveness.

This issue of *The Bookmark* brings together articles by several of these power brokers to share with you their personal perspectives. Cynthia Jenkins draws on her background as a former librarian and current New York State Assemblywoman to comment on the importance of libraries and reading in today's diverse and challenging climate; Susan Lehr concisely catalogs what research has taught us concerning the development of imagination in children; Irene Rosenthal emphasizes the important role parents play in cultivating the child's uniqueness and individuality; and Harriet Sobol recalls the pleasures derived from three generations of family trips to the library, reinforcing her view of libraries alive with fact and fantasy in the materials they contain and the experiences they offer. Programs that encourage reading and creative exploration of the world and its wonders are described by Marguerite Lewis, Nancy Rubery, Sheldon Tarakan, Ellen LiBretto, Sharon Breen, Carolyn Travers, Kathleen Connors, Vivienne Anderson and Mary Murphy; while authors Dave Ross, Bruce Coville, Stephanie Tolan, Michael Rutherford and Susan Katz recount the special memories and experiences that fashioned their fantasies into words that transport young readers from reality to the reaches of individual imagination. Reinforcing the importance of the themes of the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services — productivity, literacy and democracy — and supporting New York State Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol's contention in "A New Compact for Learning" that many of today's teaching methods are obsolete, Valorie Beard describes the current trend toward the whole language approach to reading — a philosophy that expresses the belief that a child's literacy and creativity is best facilitated by immersion in reading, writing and speaking. Capturing all the elements of this issue, Bruce Degen has provided the centerfold illustration and the drawing above that visually bring "Imagination and the Magic of Libraries" together. To each of these 20 talented contributors I extend thanks for their willingness to share their competency and their creativity.

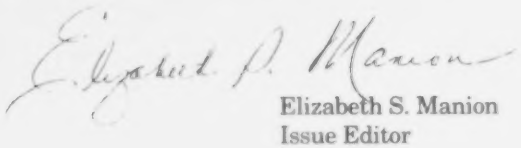
Special thanks are also extended to Anne Simon, Library Development Specialist, New York State Library Division of Library Development; Ristiina Wigg, Children's Services Consultant, Mid-Hudson Library System; Randall Enos, Children's Consultant, Ramapo Catskill Library System; Lisa Wemett, Assistant Director, Fairport Public Library; Iris Bartkowski, Glenmont Elementary Schools; and Frank Hodge, owner of Albany's "Hodge Podge Book Store"; who suggested substance and imparted inspiration for this issue of *The Bookmark*.

The Library of Congress has designated 1991 as "The Year of the Lifetime Reader," and a recent issue of *School Library Journal* suggests that to prepare the youth of today for the world of tomorrow we must:

> "Expose children and young adults to a wide variety of ideas, concepts, and experiences through a diverse collection of resources, speakers, exhibits and events that broaden their view of the world.

Stimulate imaginations with stories, things to touch, dramatic play, music, puppets, crafts, projects and resource people."

Entitled "Kids Need Libraries," that April 1990 article offers concrete suggestions to school and public libraries for helping the 21.5 million Americans who are children become readers for life. The most powerful suggestion is that, "Kids need the creative ability to dream a better world." Let's help all our youth realize that dream!



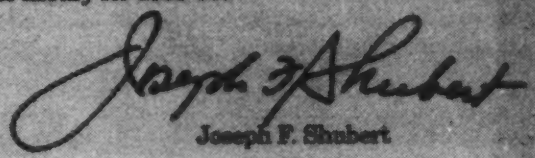
Elizabeth S. Manion
Issue Editor

Two great celebrations early this year enabled libraries to involve their communities in events both unusual and ordinary. The "Magic of Books" theme for the 1990 Imagination Celebration brought about new connections among schools, arts groups, illustrators, writers and others. For the "Night of 7,000 Stars" school, public, academic and special libraries of all sizes sponsored reading programs on April 25 as a centerpiece of National Library Week and as the first public event of the 1990 Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services. The events were new — but they were also ordinary because libraries are places where children and adults each day, year in and year out, savor arts, ideas, books and reading.

These events caused us to think about the way in which libraries help expand the imagination, how they are magical places for children and adults. As a result, and with the encouragement of leaders of the New York Library Association Youth Services Section, we developed plans for this issue of *The Bookmark*. (We had ideas for articles on the ways in which libraries help expand the imagination of adults of all ages, but space restrictions led us to focus this issue on children and parents.)

When Elizabeth Manion agreed to edit the issue, we knew we would present our readers articles of immediate interest and lasting value. Ms. Manion is Director of the Marlboro, NY, Free Library. She is a community leader in Ulster County and a member of the Marlboro School Board. She has served as a library trustee and as a former member of the Mid-Hudson Library System Board. She is secretary of the New York State Association of Library Boards. She has just completed a five-year term on the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries, and she chaired the 1987-88 statewide Committee on Minimum Standards for Public Libraries in New York State.

Ms. Manion and her authors have provided us an excellent issue of *The Bookmark*. In addition, this issue includes *The New York State Library: 1990*, a brief report on the library for 1989-90.



Joseph F. Shubert

# POWERFUL PARTNERS — DISCOVERY AND DEMOCRACY

*An Interview with Cynthia Jenkins By Anne E. Simon*

When Assemblywoman Cynthia Jenkins, Chair of the Assembly Subcommittee on Libraries, learned that the proposed title for this article included the phrase "Discovery and Democracy," Ms. Jenkins commented, "that *is* the library." How does a housewife (and mother and librarian) end up in the New York State Assembly as the first black woman elected from Queens Assembly District 29? Assemblywoman Cynthia Jenkins' path involved raising a son, 22 years of increasing involvement in community and political organizations, obtaining a master's degree in library science from Pratt, doing postgraduate work at Columbia University and working as a children's librarian and branch librarian in the Queens Borough Public Library.

Ms. Jenkins has been a member of the New York State Assembly since 19[illegible], running unopposed for a fifth term in 1990. She is the first black woman to be elected to public office from Southeast Queens. She is Chair of the Assembly Subcommittee on Libraries, as well as a member of standing Committees on Education, Higher Education, Social Services and Corrections. In 1990, Governor Cuomo appointed her to the Governor's Commission on Libraries, and she will be a delegate to the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. In this interview, she shares some of her insights on children and libraries, drawn from a rich background of experience as a parent, a librarian and a legislator.

**What drew you to a library career? Was the library a "magic place" for you?**

I backed into librarianship! When I was young, women I knew went to college, got married, raised a family and did community volunteer work. So I went to the University of Louisville and earned a BA in history and political science with honors, and I married Joseph D. Jenkins. (Mr. Jenkins is President of J.D. Jenkins Insurance Agency.) We had a son (who is now the Rev. Joseph D. Jenkins, Jr.). While raising my son, I got involved in PTA and civic organizations and started doing volunteer work in the school library. I found I was going there almost every day. I looked for a career, other than teaching school, that fit in with responsibilities of wife and mother, and decided to go to library school. I attended Pratt and worked as a trainee at Brooklyn Public Library before going to work as a children's librarian at the Queens Borough Public Library.

I would say the library is a magic place. A library is one place that people can be themselves, *truly* be themselves. The public library fosters children's creative development because children are free to browse, select what they want, and stay as long as they want. Because we don't push, we let them browse, we let them select what they want, we let them stay as long as they want to, we're good listeners, and we're not there giving unwanted advice. Youth services librarians are good listeners. Instead of being another adult giving advice or telling children what to do, they try to learn from children and let them be creative and use their imaginations. Good listeners help libraries become magical places.

**How can libraries meet the learning needs of young people from diverse ethnic and family backgrounds?**

In the library, each child is learning from another child, another culture. We learn from each other. For instance, in a community like Flushing you have all these different ethnic groups and you have different activities in the library. The more activities you have with them together, the more sensitive the child is going to become and respect other peoples.

Library programs can be structured to bring people of different cultural backgrounds together. They broaden the horizons of the people who are there — without preaching — just by giving information and getting people talking to one another. The library is the only place for programs like that. When the *parents* bring the children, the parents are sitting there, talking to people who have a different culture and a different background. They talk about food, clothing and holiday customs. Parents and children at library programs discover not only ethnic differences in these situations but also, that people are people and we all want the same things.

**How should state and Federal governments help libraries promote public awareness of their services to the citizens in a democratic society, particularly families?**

Government hasn't done enough for libraries because it doesn't understand the role of libraries. Most of the information requests that come to government agencies could be handled by librarians. Instead of duplicating what libraries are already doing, public agencies should

be promoting libraries to their clientele.

If government agencies and libraries worked directly as partners, everyone would benefit. Look, agencies could join libraries in outreach services to families. For example, many people bring their small children with them when they come to a government office and there is nothing for the small child to do. The parent is sitting there all day long with this four- or five-year-old trying to get the child to sit and be quiet. There should be a children's corner in that office. The public library could help the government office by developing the children's corner there, and could supply materials and programs right in the office to people who probably aren't now coming to the library. The library would showcase its services for children and youth in a setting supported by government.

Public libraries also have the information resources to help families get the government agency services they need. A lot of people don't know what service the government has for them, or even how to find out about the services they need. Libraries could do more to get that information to people.

Libraries also help the people public agencies are trying to serve. In the local library, the expectant mother can get all this information that will be very helpful. In your local library, you can find information about any health problem that you might have — whether it is preventive or illness. But many people don't know that. Social services agency people could let their clients know the library can help them. All of the public agencies — Federal, state, or local — should promote libraries. That kind of promotion would translate into library money long-term and into building a constituency.

**What "Decade of the Child" coalitions can be developed to promote library services to young people?**

We need more cooperative efforts between schools and public libraries — especially when children are out of school in the summer. In the eight weeks that the child is out of school, he loses some of his skills. The public library has summer reading programs — how can we get more children into them? What should the teacher or the principal do over the 10 months to connect the children to the library? They do not think of the public library as having a connection with school. Now, the librarians have to promote the summer reading programs themselves. We have to recruit by ourselves. If the schools worked with the public library and got children into summer reading programs and year-round activities, children, their families and schools would benefit. How much our children would benefit if principals and teachers saw the public library as a life-

long learning institution!

There are so many other "Decade of the Child" possibilities. In Queens, we did community outreach to promote library use among families who had not used the library before. One of the libraries was near a housing project. We would go out on Friday morning where the mothers were sitting on the bench with their children and we would get them to come to the library. We would do story hours for children, and librarians would talk to the mothers about their interests and give them materials. These are people who would not have come on their own; they came because we went to where they were.

We're going to have to go where the people are. I am really sorry that many places have stopped bookmobile service because of lack of money. The bookmobile should go where the people are.

**What can school and public libraries do to reach more children with special needs?**

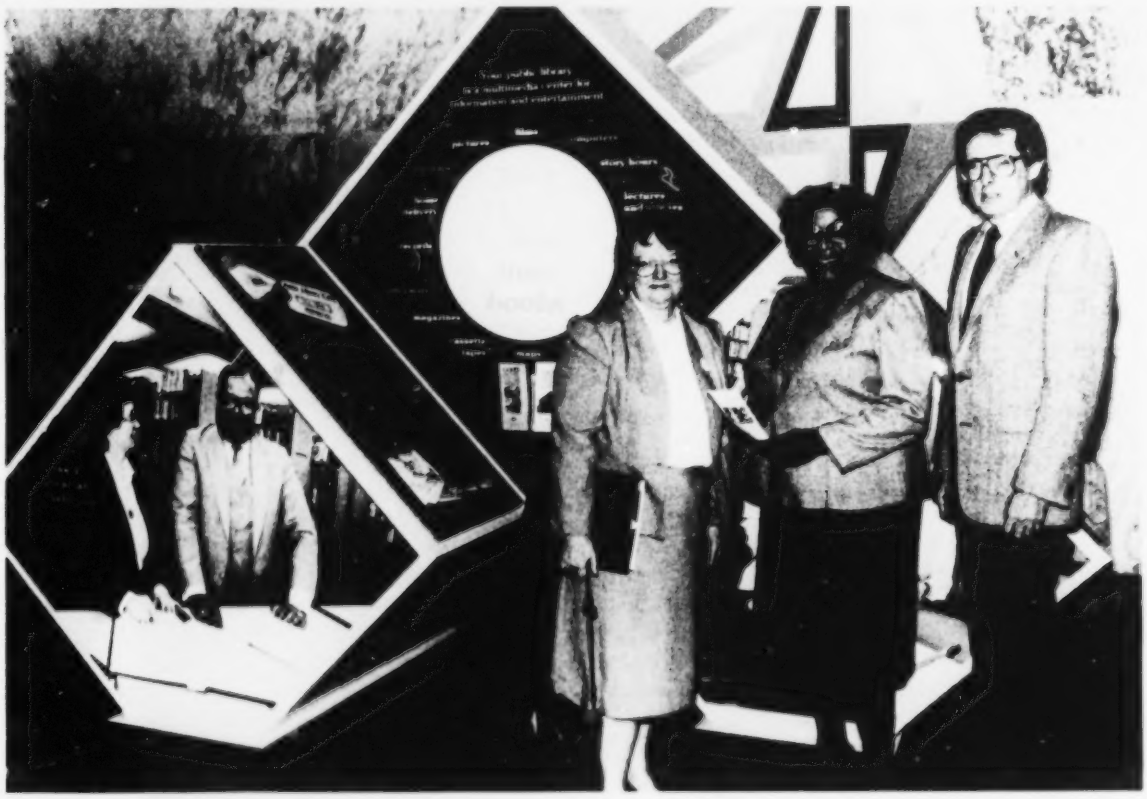
Becoming familiar with the local institutions and agencies serving children with special needs is essential. We need to learn about their specific needs. Outreach services may be the only way institutionalized children will be able to get library service. Pregnant teens are an especially important group to reach. They need information on parenting skills and to learn about the library as a family and life skills resource.

**What kinds of programs would you like to see librarians develop with the 1993 State aid for "enriched coordinated outreach programs...for preschool and school age children and their parents?"**

There is only $300,000 there, but I think we should do something important with it. Fundamental, essential things. Reading aloud to children is essential to promote the love of reading. This needs to begin before children start school. If children come to school and they've been read to in the public library by a professional children's librarian, they'll bring a lot of richness to that first grade.

Parenting skills would be another priority. As parents bring us their questions on parenting, they will branch out into other types of library materials.

This should be a "people" program. We need to do "neighborhood things" to get children and their parents into the library. If we do, we can pry them away from their television sets — a real "killer" of children's creative potential. Librarians need to look at how they might be *stifling* the imagination of young people. Children have all this imagination and creativity, and then somewhere along the line, too often we adults kill it.



Before we tell a child not to "color a pig purple," we should remember that she's going to learn soon enough that a pig is not purple. She might not even be dealing with the pig, she just might want to see how this crayon looks. So let them explore, let them do. After all, the library should encourage children to explore their interests freely, at their own pace. Parents and librarians may be rushing them with *their* programs, forgetting that children have their own programs.

Coordination means getting out and doing things. Maybe libraries are more used to this than schools. Public libraries have always had less money and they do more with it than any other institution that gets taxpayer's money. Librarians are not clock watchers. The teachers come in at 8:00 a.m. and walk out the door at 3:00 p.m. Librarians will stay and they'll help. Then we're going to have to share resources. The public libraries are used to doing that — they take library materials to nursery schools, community centers and senior citizen centers. Sometimes schools don't share from one floor to the other but now we have an opportunity for both schools and libraries to work together!

**How can libraries foster creative interaction between parent and child?**

The single best way public libraries can provide this opportunity is by being open on weekends — Saturdays and Sundays. Remember that many parents have little time because they are working as well as raising children. A lot of the kids can't come to the library because of the hours. By the time the parent picks the kid up, the library's closed. The library closes at 5 o'clock or 5:30. That's too early in the city. A lot of the branch libraries are closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

Weekday and daytime hours no longer fit the lifestyle of many families. Our hours are wrong. Those 9 to 5 hours were all right when women didn't work.

Even if the libraries have to close two other days of the week, they should be open on Saturdays and Sundays. The library can really help both the parent and the child if it is open on the weekend when the parent is not working and not so rushed. If the library has to choose only one weekend day, then use Sundays. Saturday is a shopping day, a cleaning day, and all that. On Sunday people can relax a little, and get to the library.

**How can a school library and librarian create "magic" for a nonmotivated child?**

. I remember my first grade teacher. When I went to school, the first grade teacher, after you had done your heavy work in the morning, would make you take a rest. When we were resting, she would read us Aesop's *Fables*. I remember that so well. I knew I enjoyed it; I loved her reading. These experiences enrich children. The school librarian can help teachers do the same for other children.

School librarians can also help teachers use puppets and lead children to books that teach them magic and craft activities. With their knowledge of the collection, school library media specialists are a valuable (and often overlooked) resource for teachers. They could help teachers develop other kinds of teaching tools that would be attractive to the children.

**What changes in our schools would help children better develop their imaginations and creative powers?**

Don't give them all the answers. This is something I have always objected to. When we give them the answers, we may not only stunt imagination and creativity, we will never see or hear children's unique insights.

**What changes in our libraries would help children better develop their imaginations and creative powers?**

LISTEN to the kids: I've learned a lot by listening. Once a little girl came to me and said, "Mrs. Jenkins, there is something wrong with this recipe in the book. I made the cake and the cake fell, my mother made the cake and the cake fell, my aunt made the cake and the cake fell — there is something *wrong*."

Now, if that child couldn't talk to me, she wouldn't have brought the book back and said anything. I took the book home, I made the cake and the cake fell. I brought the book back and the staff were all trying to make that cake! We finally wrote the publisher because too many people had tried but failed — and something *was* wrong with the recipe. The publisher then tested the recipe and found there was one ingredient missing. So they had to call all these books back and they wrote the little girl a beautiful letter.

BE APPROACHABLE: Never wear anything that can't go into the washing machine. Children may need to touch you to get your attention and your clothes tell whether or not you are approachable!

ENCOURAGE FREE PLAY AND GAMES: As a children's librarian, I made Fridays "game day" in my branch library. We observed the children playing their games, inventing their own rules, and using the books that "happened" to be on display — giving them an open forum to play with imagination on their own. We, of course, carefully planned those displays and arranged books to be "discovered." On many occasions, children would discuss problems and neighborhood situations, as well. We encouraged these young people to go to their parents for help and advice.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Treat young people with all the respect afforded adults. Once I learned of a problem some fourth-graders were having in attending the Wednesday afternoon film programs. One little girl came to me and said, "Mrs. Jenkins, we want to have a

conference with you." I brought them in my office and she was the spokesperson for the twelve of them. She said "We're in Ms.___'s class and we always have a lot of homework on a Wednesday and we can never go into your film program. Now we recommend that you change it to Friday because then we don't have all that homework and then we can come in." As a result of the Conference I scheduled the next film series for Fridays — when there was no homework. For the "conference" I didn't go out there and talk to them in the children's room — I gave them respect and took them in my office like I would do with any adult and they liked that.

**What advice would you have for a new children's librarian?**

Love the children. A lot of times we feel like we are loving the children and we aren't. Children know if you love them. Love them and listen to them. If you listen to them, you're going to love them. All children are lovable. Remind parents to take time to *enjoy* their children. And don't forget that the library *is* discovery and democracy!

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**Anne E. Simon** *is Library Development Specialist in the New York State Library Division of Library Development. Her responsibility includes library services to children and young adults, consultant liaison service to library systems and NYLINE management. Before joining the Division of Library Development, she was Director of the Gloversville [NY] Free Library. She has contributed articles to* The Bookmark *and in 1990 edited the New York Library Association publication* Kids Welcome Here! Writing Public Library Policies that Promote Use by Young People.

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**1991 BOOK WEEK SHORT STORY WRITING CONTEST**

The Children's Book Council is offering a free set of materials to help teachers, librarians, and other organize a 1991 Book Week Short Story Writing Contest to celebrate National Children's Book Week, November 11-17, 1991. The set includes a contest announcement for reproduction and posting, an award certificate for reproduction, a press release for local media and general guidelines for running the contest as part of a Book Week celebration. Eligibility, story length, deadlines and judging will be determined by the organizers, who can tailor the contest to fit their own needs.

When the contest is over, organizers may send their winning entries to the Council to be entered in a random drawing to win a set of 1992 Newbery or Caldecott medal and honor Books. Five sets of each will be awarded. Ten winners will be chosen. The books will be sent to the organizer and their use will be determined by the organizer.

1991 Book Week Short Story Contest materials can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped (3 oz. first class postage) 9" x 12" (min. size) envelope and a one dollar bill to cover handling to Book Week Short Story Writing Contest, The Children's Book Council, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

The Children's Book Council is a national nonprofit association that encourages interest in children's trade books, both hardcover and paperback. It was founded in 1945 and currently has 60 members.

# FOSTERING IMAGINATION IN CHILDREN

*By Susan Lehr*

"The fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of science. He who knows it not and can no longer wonder, no longer feel amazement is as good as dead."[1] From birth, children are explorers and as Albert Einstein once implied, this affinity for the mysterious, this ability to wonder, follows one throughout life. Children are born with an insatiable curiosity. I like the fact that Einstein, a mathematician, was consumed with wonder for the mysterious. To conceive of relativity in relation to the universe suggests an odyssey of exploration. Three basic questions in relation to the universe suggest an odyssey of exploration. What is the role of imagination in the child's development? How does it reveal itself in the child's language and play? What might parents, teachers and librarians do to enhance this development?

## EARLY EXPLORATION

Travers' research indicates that children are involved in searching movements from the earliest weeks of life, acting upon the objects around them by grasping, banging, mouthing and throwing, in a quest that involves understanding and mastering the physical world.[2] Babies are involved in a process of learning that entails repeated and varied explorations and manipulations. Weiss suggests that young children explore their environments continually by "moving, touching, grasping, lifting, pulling, pushing, dropping."[3] Children do this through a process that is quite natural; they do not need extrinsic motivation, rather it is the event itself, the mastery of the task that is the reward. With regard to parental roles, Weiss emphasized principles of stimulation, which include providing encounters and experiences with a variety of objects, giving the child the freedom to choose those stimuli that are interesting at any particular moment, allowing the child the freedom to investigate and interact with stimulus according to the child's timetable of development and, last, an interested adult who will initiate and mediate stimulation and will respond to and interact with the child.

## INTERACTION

Jerome Bruner's work with mothers and infants stresses the critical role of parents in that process of exploration and discovery. While playing peekaboo, it was observed that parents scaffolded events for their children, that is, they held together the give and take of the game and eventually the child not only initiated the game, she or he also began to control the event, because the parent slowly turned over the reins to the child. This suggests a move from spectator to active participant, a move toward independence, which the parent has directly fostered by initiating a basic game requiring imagination, a game that calls for pretending, role playing. It also illustrated the role of parent and educator during the learning process, in that we nurture children directly and give feedback, so that they are able to succeed with tasks, communicate purposefully and focus on intentions within a meaningful context. The give and take during this kind of learning is positive and builds upon what the child knows and can do. This type of interactive learning suggests a joint action and joint attention on the part of the parent and the child.[4]

A book like *Where's Spot*, by Eric Hill, is actually an extension of the peekaboo game in which the child hunts for the lost puppy. A two-year-old child will listen to and read this book for an hour, knowing that Spot will be found, yet join in on the search with each reading. This evocation of a secondary world begins to develop early in children, and books are catalysts where this "willing suspension of disbelief" can occur. Tolkien takes this a step further and suggests that "the Story-maker proves a successful "sub-creator." He makes a Secondary World that your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true." It accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken, the magic, or rather art, has failed."[5] At a young age the child begins to enter in to such secondary worlds. Auden suggests that we choose to make "secondary worlds."[6] If this is true, the young child experiencing *Where's Spot* is participating in an early quest that involves her directly. She chooses to search for a lost dog again and again, knowing that the dog will appear safely on the last page.

## IMAGINATIVE PLAY

As children grow older in the toddler to preschool stages they begin to engage in play in which they act upon the objects in their environment. This sort of imaginative play is not frivolous. Through play the child learns to categorize and sort, to engage in social interactions, to use language for a variety of functions. Play is where the child begins the serious business of discovering and making connections with regard to cognition,

language acquisition and socioemotional development.

*Play is where the child begins the serious business of discovering and making connections.*

In the 1930s, Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky explored the critical role of play theorizing that make-believe play was directly linked to the development of abstract thought. His assertion that imagination is not present in the very young child is coupled with the idea that: "(Imagination) originally arises from action".[7] His view that learning and development are interrelated from the child's first day of life was actually revolutionary in its time. He suggests that in life the child behaves without thinking, but that in play the child, for example, tries to be what she thinks a mother should be and makes conscious decisions about behavior, language and specific actions. "The development from games with an overt imaginary situation and covert rules to games with overt rules and a covert imaginary situation outlines the evolution of children's play."[8] While playing the child acts independently of what he or she sees. In other words, imagination makes it possible for a chair to become the engine in a train or the helm of a ship or the wall of a cave set at a base of the mountain. Imagination makes it possible for the child sitting on the chair to become an engineer, a ship's captain, a caveman stalking a dinosaur and language gives rise to thought as the child acts upon her environment. In this sort of play, thought is separated from objects as we know them and the child constructs meaning at a symbolic level. Therefore, according to Vygotsky, play is a major source of development and the highest level of preschool development. In imaginative play, children take on the roles of adults, they engage in abstract thinking, they sort through the chaos that life presents and respond at levels that are independent of adult constraints. Children at this age also experiment in the same fashion with writing and reading, as they "take on" the literacy behaviors surrounding them and begin to experience story in both expressive and receptive capacities.

*Imagination makes it possible for a chair to become the engine in a train or the helm of a ship or the wall of a cave set at a base of the mountain.*

Today's research adds the critical component of "negotiating meaning," to this notion of active construction.[9] Children are first and foremost meaning-makers. They try to make sense of their worlds, thus the eternal why. Two of the functions of language that Halliday observed in his young child included imaginative and heuristic language.[10] Pinnell defined imaginative language in the young child as being used to "create a world of one's own, to express fantasy through dramatic play, drama, poetry or stories..." and that "unless it is fostered it will rapidly disappear in later years." Heuristic language is defined as the language used "to explore the environment, to acquire knowledge and understanding...for investigation, for wondering, for figuring things out. It is the language of inquiry and is one of the most important functions."[11] She concluded that when first-graders are actively involved in using language functionally they are seeking solutions to real problems in interactive situations in which querying is central. Yet, Pinnell found very little heuristic language in the classrooms she studied.

## CREATING A CLIMATE OF LEARNING

Ironically, Heath found that children coming from an oral tradition with a strong sense of imaginative story did not do well in a typical elementary classroom, because their ability to spin tales was not perceived as a strength. Their lack of conventional English and their lack of familiarity with cracking the conventional literacy code actually ensured their failure in the system. In a holistic classroom this child's language and skills would be used as a stepping stone to the exploration of other types of discourse and would be perceived as a strength rather than a weakness.

Conversely, Heath found that children coming from a rigid background, where imaginative play and storying were not acceptable, where concrete labeling and noninteractive, nonquestioning story sessions were the norm, did well in the early years of school when rote memorization was stressed. However, these children soon floundered when abstraction, critical thinking and application to knowledge were required.[12]

In my own response to literature research with first grade children, I discovered that Sandy, the teacher I observed over the course of a year, had exhibited a pattern during storytelling, math explorations and science experiments that included the standard phrase, "Why do you suppose...?" Her stance invited listeners to participate, to wonder, to question and to offer their opinions based on what they knew about the world. This group of children was comprised of many risk takers who explored problems in stories from a variety of perspectives. Their perspectives were accepted and encouraged. The children also used reading and writing for a variety of authentic purposes. Not surprisingly, their

abilities to explore the themes of books, talk about new vocabulary, explore character motivations, consider the author's intentions and make connections to other books were well-developed. They completed interviews and surveys about various aspects of books they read, charting the results. Solving math and science problems or experiments was a challenge that they jumped into expecting to succeed. They were typically observant learners and competent language users. Oral language was encouraged; group work was central to the workday; brainstorming was a common approach to problem solving.[13]

NARRATIVE AND IMAGINATION

Bruno Bettelheim, in *The Uses of Enchantment*, has explored the role of fairy tales in the life of the child stressing the importance of well-crafted stories with real dilemmas, authentic problems and just solutions.

"For a story truly to hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity. But to enrich his life, it must stimulate his imagination; help him to develop his intellect and to clarify his emotions; be attuned to his anxieties and aspirations, give full recognition to his difficulties, while at the same time suggesting solutions to the problems which perturb him...Just because his life is often bewildering to him, the child needs even more to be given the chance to understand himself in this complex world with which he must learn to cope. To be able to do so, the child must be helped to make some coherent sense out of the turmoil of his feelings. The child finds this kind of meaning through fairy tales."[14]

Huck, Hepler and Hickman talk about the fascination that young children have for details, how they enjoy searching illustrations for specific objects and how older preschoolers make a game of searching for hidden items in picturebooks.[15] Books like *Beaches* by Peter Sis, and *Each Peach Pear Plum* and *The Jolly Postman*, both by Janet and Allen Ahlberg, invite reader participation and exploration. Books, rhymes, jingles, songs and poems invite children to play imaginatively with the sounds, patterns and rhythms of language. Predictable books like *The Napping House*, by Don and Audrey Wood, *The Big Sneeze*, by Ruth Brown, and *Goodnight Moon*, by Margaret Wise Brown, have been written and illustrated with a great deal of imagination and attention to detail and provide the kind of stimulus that encourages successful entry into literacy. Story is central to these lively books, yet the predictable patterns help children make the connections between the spoken words, meaning and the print itself. Familiarity with books builds a sense of story, exposes the child to concepts of print, increases the child's background knowledge about the world and stimulates language development.

*Librarians are the specialists who can connect the Kristins and the Matthews of the world with the Ramonas, the Henry Huggins and the Madelines of the bookshelves.*

The critical role of the parent in the child's cognitive and language development is unquestionable, as is the power of story. Pinnell has suggested instructional strategies for teachers to promote imaginative and heuristic language, many of which are easily applicable and adaptable for parents at home.

**IMAGINATIVE LANGUAGE**

1. Create situations that naturally elicit spontaneous dramatic play; for example, house corner, dress up, blocks for younger children and drama and role-playing for older children.
2. Read stories and books that feed the imagination and are a stimulus for art, drama and discussion.
3. Provide time for children to talk in groups and/or with partners before they begin their writing or imaginative topics.
4. Encourage "play" with language — the sounds of words and the images they convey.

**HEURISTIC LANGUAGE**

1. Structure classroom experiences so that interest and curiosity are aroused.
2. Create real problems for children to solve.
3. Put children in pairs or work in groups for problem-solving activities.
4. Use heuristic language to stimulate such language in children.
5. Try projects that require study on the part of the entire class, including the teacher. Find some questions no one knows the answer to![16]

Central to this type of environment is the premise that children are natural learners and that learning is an active process. Children construct meaning. This is how they learn to use language, how they learn to write and to read, how they successfully create secondary worlds. Benton writes that "the secondary world that each child makes when writing a story and that he or she remakes when reading or listening to one is fundamental to literature teaching."[17] Benton stresses the

importance of personal responses to literature as part of a model that is "central to the praxis of English teaching." Powerful messages for those who "teach" literature. Personal response is critical and is directly linked to risk taking. Imagination is arrested when a preoccupation with correctness prevails, when children are expected to fit into molds. The outcome is nothing short of stifling. Ramona Quimby is a character children love and typically identify with. Why? Ramona is like them, she makes mistakes, she learns from them, she experiments. Ramona's imagination is fertile.

## THE ROLE OF IMAGINATIVE LIBRARIANS

Obviously, librarians are the specialists who can connect the Kristins and the Matthews of the world with the Ramonas, the Henry Huggins and the Madelines of the bookshelves. Beyond that? Librarians can model the interactive read-aloud setting, which is so important to the child's success with literacy. Librarians in schools and in public libraries can encourage children to pursue their own agendas as they listen and respond to books being read to them.

*Librarians can help keep that sense of wonder about books and about the world alive by making the library a noisy, happening kind of a place.*

Read aloud time in the first grade classroom was a noisy affair. As Sandy read *The Fisherman and His Wife*, illustrated by Margot Zemach, new vocabulary was explained typically by the children, sometimes as an aside. Children gave warnings about being too greedy, made observations about how characters were developed differently in another version of the same story, compared the chant spoken to the magic fish. Sandy could not have anticipated the wide range of their responses, but she allowed them to happen and acted as a catalyst when necessary.

Librarians can help keep that sense of wonder about books and about the world alive by making the library a noisy, happening kind of a place. In schools children's work and projects can be displayed. Those dry skills lessons can be taught in the context of the classroom themes that children are studying. Rather than teaching in isolation, researching and reference skills can be tied directly to the studies of the children. This will necessitate dialogue, between classroom teachers and school librarians and will entail planning and coordination between both. Author visits can leave the domain of Hollywood star on tour and become intensive workdays where children meet and learn about the craft of writing and share strategies for creating those secondary worlds.

Libraries are not mere residences for books, nor are librarians simply their guardians. When teachers come to libraries, they want more than just a title. They want to know how to use them effectively with kids, how to link them to other books, other genres. They want to know who the intended audience is. They want to know how to find folktales to enhance a study of a particular culture, when to use a comparison chart, how to web a theme with books at the core. They want titles that will motivate reluctant readers and challenge avid readers. They want books about garbage, galaxies and owls.

*When teachers come to libraries, they want more than just a title.*

Librarians are the people sitting in the middle. They have the books and the knowledge that can connect to the child's imagination. They are in the unique position of being able to dialogue with parents, children and teachers. They are central to the themes and studies that occur in schools because they know the titles. I conduct many workshops with teachers and I generally tell them to go to their librarians, because librarians can help them make the connections that keep that sense of wonder alive for children both at home and at school.

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## NOTABLE COMPUTER SOFTWARE FOR CHILDREN

The Computer Software Evaluation Committee of the Association for Library Service to Children has four outstanding microcomputer software programs for use by children. The list, the first to be released by the Association, includes programs copyrighted in 1989 and 1990 and was compiled by a committee headed by Carol A. Doll, Chair of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Washington, Seattle. The software programs on the list are:

- *Hyperstudio* (version 2.1). Robert Wagner Publishing, El Cajon, CA, © 1989, Apple IIGS. At least 1MB (will run faster with more memory). 3.5 disk drive. Can load on hard disk. $149.
  *Hyperstudio* uses its own paint program, text editor and sound recorder to allows the user with little or no programming experience or skills to create original programs, called stacks, and to access and modify the *Hyperstudio* stacks created by others. With this program, which incorporates all the IIGS capabilities, the *Hyperstudio* user is limited only by the boundaries of his or her imagination. With the addition of a video overlay card, the program can incorporate video and laser disk images, and with a scanner the program can use photographic images.
- *Math Blaster Mystery*. Davidson and Associates, Torrance, CA, © 1989. Apple II series/IBM/MAC. 128 K and extended 80-column card. $49.95.
  In four different activities, children follow steps to solve story problems, weigh evidence on scales, work to break numerical codes and search for clues to solve math problems. This program, aimed at grades 5-12, encourages the use of logic and sequencing skills. Four levels of increasing difficulty and a handy on-screen calculator strengthen this software.
- *The Playroom*. Broderbund Software, Inc. San Rafael, CA. Apple II series/IBM/MAC. 128K. $39.95-$49.95. Color monitor recommended.
  Pepper Mouse leads the way as preschoolers explore letters and numbers, telling time, and creating picture stories. Children can also listen to the toy bird chirp, play with a flip book and crawl through the mouse hole for exciting number games.
- *Where in Time is Carmen San Diego?* Broderbund Software, Inc. 1989. Apple II Series/IBM/MAC. 128 K. $44.95-$9.95.
  Hot on the trail of Carmen San Diego and her game, players work against the clock to decipher clues based on history, geography and the arts while pursuing the culprits through various countries and time periods to retrieve stolen artifacts. Players strengthen their library skills as they use *New America Desk Dictionary* (packaged with the software) in their search in this fast-paced, humorous program supported by eye-catching graphics. For grades five and up.

***Susan Pine*** *of The New York Public Library is a member of the Computer Software Evaluation Committee.*

# IMAGINATION INITIATIVES — A PARENT'S POINT OF VIEW

*By Irene Rosenthal*

I remember sending my first child back to his classroom after a particularly exhilarating school vacation almost 10 years ago and thinking with some genuine regret that just when we were beginning to share some true learning experiences, school had to come along again and interrupt his education. At school he was wading through worksheets, memorizing multiplication tables and learning to take turns on the climbing equipment. At home we were reenacting every battle of the Revolutionary War. I never questioned the value of the experiences he was having in school. I just assumed that it would be his teacher's job to teach him the many skills he needed as the foundation for his "formal education," and it would be our job at home to capitalize on his imagination and turn learning into an adventure.

I am happy to report that during the past 10 years, this dichotomy in my children's education has become less and less pronounced. Classrooms have become a lot more lively and spontaneous and, yes, I have been known to drill French verbs and multiplication tables at home. At the same time, the role of the parent as one of the child's primary educators is becoming more and more recognized by the educational establishment. The New York State Education Department's recently proposed "New Compact for Learning" clearly states,

> *...we realize that if children are to learn and develop well, parents must take more responsibility for the education of their children (and must be given the opportunity to do so)....Increasingly we appreciate the wisdom of the ancient African proverb: It takes the whole village to raise a child.*[1]

Why would the educational community regard parents, most of whom are not professional educators and are without knowledge of current strategies, as co-equal partners in the education of our children? Quite simply, I think it is because parents are in a unique position to achieve some significant educational ideals, the most important being to make learning fun.

Any teacher will tell you that some degree of conformity is essential when dealing with a class of 25 children. It is necessary for children to subdue some of their individuality in order for a classroom to function. But as parents, it is our privilege to celebrate our children's individuality. We get to know not only the reasonably behaved "outer" child but also the child within; the warrior, the wizard, the prey and the poet that each child becomes through imaginative play. It is our intimate knowledge of this inner child with all his glorious dimensions that qualifies us as educators. The opportunity we have to recognize the importance of our children's imaginations, encourage creative play and then capitalize on this as a foundation for further learning presents the potential for each and every home to become an ideal educational environment.

Imagination is what provides a child with ideas. Creativity is the process by which these ideas can be channelled into accomplishments and adventures. Parents can both broaden the scope of their children's imaginative horizons and outfit them effectively to explore their own creative potential. The ground rules for parents in this undertaking are fairly simple:

1. One must always respect the child as initiator, creator, doer. The parent's role is a secondary one. The parent is the facilitator, the resource person, the person who works behind the scenes to make it all happen. In other words, you are producing the play in which your child is both the playwright and the star. (That is not to say that you will not be called upon to play many supporting roles in the production.)
2. Parents should individualize activities to reflect the interest and abilities of their own unique and wonderful child. Some well-meaning parents try to involve their children in just about everything. Unfortunately this takes so much time and energy that a child might not have anything of herself left to apply to something she really finds fascinating, even if that something is just timing a ladybug as it crosses the road.
3. It is the process and not the end result that is important. Encourage an atmosphere of experimentation and spontaneity. Mistakes are OK. Mess and clutter are OK as long as they are cleaned up eventually. Provide an atmosphere of relaxed tolerance in which a child can give herself permission to be silly or serious in turn. This is not to say that your mutual projects should dissipate into nondirected play sessions. A child who is not applying herself to solving problems (What happens when I mix this paint with that paint? What if there is no bad guy when we play cowboys this time?) will quickly tire of an activity. The ideal is to simultaneously main-

tain a serious level of interest plus the ability to laugh your head off at everything you've tried to do.

4. In seeking enrichment activities for your child, be a discriminating consumer. Children's programming is now big business. Some of it can be very expensive. Some of it can be downright mediocre. Children learn and explore by doing. There is an old Chinese proverb that states, "What I hear I forget, What I see, I remember. What I do, I know."[2] Take advantage of some of the many "hands-on" workshops offered through museums, summer institutes and schools. The best service you can provide for your child outside the home, is to put her or him in touch with truly talented people. Some of the best people working with children today, entertainers, children's authors, etc., will include a free public performance as part of their regular tours. Enrichment does not have to be expensive. Various ethnic cultural organizations, historical societies and special interest groups schedule events that can delight your children's eyes and even taste buds for little or no money. The time you spend scouting for these programs and events could be one of the wisest investments you make on your child's behalf.

5. Try not to be too snobbish in your selection of materials that will enhance and enliven your child's interests. Sometimes a popular movie, a comic book, even a TV commercial can spark interests that can be played out as worthwhile projects. I shall never forget the two boys who literally translated for themselves (It was in academic English) a historical treatise on 15th century Romania at my library because they were so enthralled with the Dracula legend.

6. It is your job to make the connections and follow through on the interests that will bring a cohesiveness to a child's creative experiences. Last summer my youngest son was participating in a hiking and orienteering course when he "discovered" a small family grave site in the Helderberg Mountains. His leader mentioned that this family was very friendly with the van Rensselaer family of Cherry Hill, a local restored historical home that is open to the public. We lost no time in getting over to Cherry Hill, where a tour guide was surprised, to say the least, that an eight-year-old boy would choose to spend most of a hot summer day intensely investigating every detail of 19th century life. But, after all, he felt he had an intimate connection with friends of the family. And that was just the beginning of our romp through Albany city history.

Once you have set these ground rules, you have a pretty good idea of what you can do as a parent to nurture creative experiences at home. So you begin by observing your child's interests and enthusiasms, ready to pounce and extend any flight of fancy into a full-scale learning extravaganza. But an additional obstacle arises. You discover that your child does indeed have an enthusiasm that borders on obsession, only it is with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Do not despair! Your child's ambition to grow up to be a Ninja Turtle merely indicates that his imagination has been sparked by these interesting creatures, and he is in the process of converting this inspiration into all sorts of creative play. But aren't there any other sparks around? Couldn't you, as a parent, help him to go a bit beyond "cowabunga?"

## *It takes the whole village to raise a child.*

Far and away the best source of inspiration for every child is still the vast and varied body of children's literature that is free and available at your local public library. Any parent who is not regularly sharing children's books with his child is doing that child a cruel injustice and doing himself an equally unfortunate disservice. Reading together produces children who are truly literate, discriminating lifelong readers. And if that benefit were not enough, you are, in the process, providing your child with enough characters, incidents and settings to set off as many imaginative sparks as he can handle. You owe it to yourself not to be excluded from this magical process. It can give you both a common language with which you can talk about the truly important things in his life. I'm not only talking about reading aloud to your preschoolers. I am amazed at how many parents stop reading to their children as soon as their children learn to read themselves. Why cut yourself off from a significant part of your child's development just when their literature is at its most interesting and their egos are at their most vulnerable? There are special rewards for parents who read to their young children — the joy, the exuberance, the candor these sessions generate are unsurpassed. But the best rewards are reserved for parents who read to their children persistently, over the course of many years. The intimacy that develops along the way is one of the sweet and lasting joys of parenthood.

There are excellent handbooks available to parents to help in the selection of read-aloud materials. The best resource, of course, is your local children's librarian, who is an expert in the field of children's literature and can match the books in her collection to what you tell him or her about the unique interests and personality of your child.

As parents we are in the best position to give our children what should be the foundation of every education

— an appreciation of their own uniqueness and individuality. If we can use this appreciation to encourage their imaginations and cultivate their creativity, we will have gone far in assisting them in their biggest creative effort of all — the creation of themselves.

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**WHAT YOU ARE**
*By Richard*

You are the lion
I am the jungle.
You are the drawing
And I am the artist.
You are the camera,
I am the picture.
You are the sky
And I am the earth.
You are the book
And I'm the reader.
You are God
And I'm the child.

— reprinted with permission from *Just Born Poems, Volume Five, An Anthology of Poetry Written by the Children at St. Mary's Hospital, Bayside, NY*, Poets in Public Service, Inc., 1990.

# A READER REMEMBERS

*By Harriet Langsam Sobol*

The warm August breeze carries with it a hint of the sea. I am in Mystic, CT, at a Chief State School Officers meeting with my husband. He is at a session that doesn't interest me so I have some time to myself. After shopping a bit, I gravitate to the public library, a spot I usually head for when I'm out of town and on my own. I browse at the new book shelf. There is a book by Alice Hoffman that I have been wanting to read. I carry it to an easy chair and open it. From the corner of my eye I see a young mother picking a little girl up at the book checkout so the child can see the librarian check the books out.

It was my fourth birthday and my first visit to the Mount Vernon Public Library. My mother, a New York City school teacher had been bringing books home to read to me for as long as I could remember but this was my first trip with her. Her time was limited but it was Saturday and my birthday so she made time. She took me by the hand to the picture book corner and we chose books together. We sat at a table and looked at each one carefully to make sure they were what I wanted.

When it was time to check out, we stood on line to wait our turn. My mother showed me how to open my books to the back inside cover where the date due form was. She lifted me up so I could watch the librarian stamp the due date in the back of the book with the rubber stamp that was attached to a pencil. The librarian said to me, "This is the day that your books are due. Remember to return them because you will have to pay three cents a day for each book that is overdue." She instructed me how to wrap my books up in newspaper so that they wouldn't get wet in the April rain.

That visit was the beginning of a love affair for me. The library became a second home to me, the books a source of delight. As soon as I was old enough I went myself, checking out and returning, sometimes paying overdue fines as well. On days that I was sick and at home, I waited anxiously for my mother to bring books home for me. The books, with their tough, colorful library bindings, brought the odor of the library into my bedroom.

When I was a teenager my interest in boys rivaled my love of reading. The library remained an appealing place for me. If there were no interesting boys in the high school room, at least there were books to check out.

When my daughter was born she visited the library with me when she was an infant. As soon as I could trust her with someone else's books, we would choose books together and I would lift her up at the book checkout desk just as my mother had done so many years ago. As my daughter grew, trips to the library became part of our routine together as I found my old favorites for her to read.

She is an adult now and we share our interest in books. Her work takes her to live in cities around the country. After she has moved into an apartment she always reports to me about her visit to the local public library.

I look at my watch and realize that I was to meet my husband for lunch five minutes ago. Regretfully I close *Seventh Heaven*, return it to the shelf and walk by the book checkout into the summer air.

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# PARENTS AS READING PARTNERS: A POSITIVE APPROACH

*By Marguerite D. Lewis*

"Books are the food that develop the intellect, character, and personality, for in all good literature there is truth, wisdom, and imagination."[1] — Gertrude Gill

Reading is important:

- Students who read well and enjoy reading attain a higher success rate during their school years.
- There is a difference between learning to read and reading to learn.
- Reading skills improve dramatically when students discover reading is fun.

The late Senator Donovan pondered these well-known and accepted facts during his tenure as Chairman of the New York State Senate Education Committee. He was concerned over the trend towards lower reading scores of too many New York State school children. He searched for a way to reverse that trend.

Senator Donovan knew parents were interested in helping their children develop good reading habits but needed direction. He knew the schools were interested in developing additional opportunities for parents to become involved in meaningful activities that would complement the school program. The program would be organized and conducted through the schools but the reading would take place in the home.

In 1979, Senator Donovan set up a task force, which included members of his staff as well as Bob Keeshan (Captain Kangaroo); Dr. Richard Halsey, Dean of the School of Information Science and Policy at SUNY Albany; Bobbye S. Goldstein, New York City Public Schools; Riistina Wigg, Mid-Hudson Library System; and concerned representatives from the schools, the PTA and the general public.

The task force developed the philosophy and guidelines for a very simple and easy program. "Parents, read with your children for 15 minutes every day." They designed brochures, materials, suggestions and ideas for organizing the program in schools. The information was disseminated through mailings to every school, radio and TV public station and to State and local professional conferences.

Each school was encouraged to use imagination and creativity to tailor the program to the home-school community. The Glenmont School, in the Bethlehem Central School District, was one of the first schools to adopt the program. Begun in April 1979, the program is now in its 12th consecutive year. It runs from September through June and is continuously updated to successfully maintain the interest of home and school. A checkoff sheet, to be filled in for each daily reading, is sent home on Friday. The children return the previous week's completed sheet on Monday morning. Weekly certificates are awarded Monday afternoon. Small gifts are awarded at an assembly for 10-, 20- and 30-week participation, with an extra special gift awarded for a full year's participation. A PTA committee assumes full responsibility for record keeping and gift selection.

The program was launched in the Capital District in fall 1979. At the invitation of the Glenmont School, representatives from more than 30 schools attended a panel discussion in which Senator Donovan, Dr. Halsey, Mr. Donald Robillard, principal, and Glenmont teachers and parents participated. They discussed ways to implement a Parents As Reading Partners program.

Each school's Parents As Reading Partners program is unique. Some schools have adopted a full-year approach, including checkoff sheets and activities for the summer months. Some schools have organized an intense, formal, six- to eight-week program each year, establishing habits to be continued through the year.

The 15-minute reading time in the home may be enjoyed in a variety of ways:

- Mother *and* Dad read with one or more children.
- Mother *or* Dad read with one or more children.
- A relative reads with one or more children.
- An older sibling reads with one or more children.
- An adult care-giver reads with one or more children.
- The reading is shared through taking turns.

The reading itself may take many forms:

- Fiction and nonfiction may be read — biography is popular.
- Magazines and newspapers may be read.
- Craft books, cookbooks and other "how to" books may be read to create projects or to plan events or trips.
- Stories and books written by the children may be read.

The reading of a book or story should be only the beginning. A good book should be the catalyst to discussion, question, comparison and the sharing of thoughts. A quiet time of closeness, with the complete attention of the adult, is so conducive to sharing, that the child is able to verbalize. The child can open his or her heart and mind, to share innermost feelings, often brought into the open as the result of a well-chosen book. The child also receives the positive message that reading is important and fun. Later, those feelings can be reinforced through recall of stories, characters and events, when a situation occurs reminiscent of a particular story or event.

As programs were adopted across the State, Senator Donovan perceived that a day of learning and sharing would be valuable to school personnel and parents. The first Parents As Reading Partners conference was held in fall 1979, at the Turf Inn in Albany. The conference successfully provided a full day of speakers, exhibits and an awards luncheon, honoring those who had contributed and benefited from the program. The site of the conference was moved to Utica in 1980 and has continued each year.

In 1987, the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers assumed the responsibility for the program. They added a second conference site in Buffalo in 1989, and, in fall 1990, three successful conferences were held at Utica, Buffalo and Huntington, Long Island.

The program continues to grow. According to Ted Sturgis, a vice president of the New York Congress of Parents and Teachers and Chairman of the Parents As Reading Partners Committee, "There are many parents as reading partners throughout New York State and we would like to see more because children need this kind of support and encouragement from within their homes." If you wish to receive assistance, write the New York Congress of Parents and Teachers, 119 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210, or phone them at (518) 462-5326.

Young children must be read to, as their understanding exceeds their reading skills. They have not lived long enough for life itself to have given them knowledge and experiences. They need to live vicariously through folktales, biography and all genres of fiction, to build up a

# Just 15 Minutes

## WHY A DAILY READING PROGRAM?

We have some good reading programs throughout New York, and we have millions of students who read well. But the best school instruction can be wasted without reading practice at home. And the child who enters school with no reading preparation in the home is already playing catch-up.

repertoire of experiences, from which to draw, to develop their own imagination, fantasy and creativity.

Inevitably, the question is raised as to how to measure the success of the Parents As Reading Partners program. Mr. Robillard stated in 1980, "We don't know what the end result will be, but we hope it develops some lifelong positive reading habits. It may even change some basic attitudes about reading and books that would allow classroom instruction to be more effective."

If each adult who participates in the program "turns on" a child to reading and books, the program measured individually and collectively will have succeeded beyond our wildest imagination.

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**Marguerite D. Lewis** *is a free-lance writer and former school library media specialist. She was School Library Media Specialist in the Bethlehem, NY, Central School. She is the author of the "Hooked On" series, published by The Center for Applied Research, Inc.*

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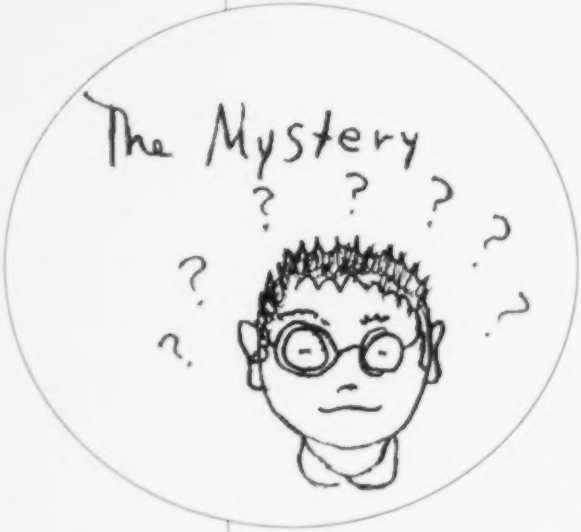
**THE MYSTERY**
*By Basit*

I love to read mysteries
and that's not the only mystery.

You are a chicken
  I am a lion.
You are the wood
  I am a house.
You are the copy cat
  I am the mirror.
You are the woman
  I am a man.
You are the paper
  I am a notebook.
You are the ship
  I am a ocean.
You are the sneaker
  I am a foot.
You are the deck
  I am a chair.
You are the closet
  I am a shelf.
You are the blackboard
  I am a chalk.

— reprinted with permission from *Just Born Poems, Volume Five, An Anthology of Poetry Written by the Children at St. Mary's Hospital, Bayside, NY*, Poets in Public Service, Inc., 1990.



# POTENTIAL FOR PARTNERSHIP — WHAT'S RIGHT WITH TV?

*By Nancy M. Rubery*

In this decade of the child, it is appropriate that libraries examine their philosophy regarding television — the medium that has dominated both the information and entertainment scene for the past four decades. Readers and writers can eloquently and passionately describe the immense impact of modern printing with its capability for full color illustration so refined that Gutenberg himself would be dazzled — if not instantly gratified. A glance at a "best book," a Caldecott Medal book or any of the titles appearing on "best illustrated" lists offers ample evidence that the printing and publishing industries have brought great literature to readers and have done so with great imagination and competence. Is there any similar venture involving film that encourages and promotes reading with such vigor? What potential is there for linking the best in literature with the medium that has so captured the attention of the American public?

Today, people working with youth, even if predisposed toward print, are more than willing to reflect upon what's right with television. Many libraries recognize that the public library's video collection is precisely the bait that draws many a new borrower through the door. Is there a librarian who will not admit that a talk show interview with an author on television does more for circulation than any poster, book review luncheon, display or press release?

Buffalo's Tony Buttino deserves credit for an enduring reading promotion, one often cited by librarians as their television tie-in — "Reading Rainbow." He and Twila C. Liggett of Lincoln, NE, targeted the project to five- to eight-year-olds and, from the outset, involved librarians. Members of the Association for Library Service to Children (a division of the American Library Association) Committee on Liaison to Mass Media helped them develop a program that librarians could use enthusiastically.[1]

The popularity of "Reading Rainbow" endures and stimulates demand for featured titles in public libraries. Linda Perkins, Coordinator of Children's Services at the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, reports a 1990 survey that selected 10 featured titles and revealed that an average of 49 hardcover copies of each were owned in her system, almost double the number of copies for popular children's titles in that system. These figures do not include paperback editions of featured titles so the real statistic is undoubtedly much higher.[2] Most consultants who recommend titles for purchase issue special lists for member libraries when the new Reading Rainbow selections are known to assist libraries in preparing for anticipated demand.

On the other side of the country, Michael Cart of the Beverly Hills Public Library hosts a weekly 30-minute cable television program about books and authors, more than one-third of which involve creators of children's books. Cart observes that harnessing technology, even one so domesticated as television to the service of books is deeply satisfying.[3]

A different approach is reported in Bulgaria where a daily television program brings contemporary Bulgarian literature to youth. Unpublished works are included in a television calendar for children where authors are introduced on their birthdays.[4]

For the International Year of the Child in 1979, a multimedia program was developed in Austria; its purpose was to provide adults with insights into children's literature. The series of eight programs included segments on why children need books, play with language and fantasy, and illustration in children's books.[5]

"Long Ago And Far Away," which is in its second season this fall, will offer 13 new films.[6] The show, produced by WGBH of Boston, is cosponsored by the Association for Library Service to Children, which assisted in development of a viewer guide and handbook.[7] A recent segment concluded with a recommendation that viewers visit their public libraries. Since the program is aired on Sunday morning, this invitation is timely because in many part of New York State, libraries are now open on Sundays, even in the smallest villages.

At least one study has demonstrated that children's reading activity increases when television viewing time diminishes.[8] The author of the report reflected upon the need for reading practice to achieve reading skill. The implication is that less television is better and it is not difficult for one thus inclined to find allies in the education world.

But is it a matter of less/more, better/worse? A recent article about using television to teach about television urges teachers to help students develop critical skills that allow them to make judgments about what comes across the screen.[9] That champion of reading aloud, Jim Trelease, himself urges respect for the enormous potential and the liabilities of the medium. On the positive side, he reflects upon how television educated the

public during the civil rights struggle but cautions that television viewing has become the main course in children's and families' intellectual lives.[10]

Linda Clark Benedict, Audio-Visual Consultant at the Wayne County Library System, endorses a new release entitled "Buy Me That! A Kid's Survival Guide to TV Advertising," a video that helps young viewers develop a healthy skepticism toward commercials.

*Much can be accomplished when librarians work in partnership with the talent of television and video.*

The October 1990 issue of *Caring for Kids*, a publication of Cornell Cooperative Extension, gives front page coverage to quotes from a 1990 report of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Task Force on Children and Television reminding us that children spend more hours watching television than time devoted to any other activity with the exception of sleeping.[11] The magnitude of the national pastime may indeed constitute addiction as a recent newspaper article suggests. Daniel Goleman reports that compulsive viewers turn to television for solace when they feel distressed and reports research recently made available in *Television and the Quality of Life* that asserts that inertia is reality for compulsive viewers who become not only passive but less discriminating in their viewing habits.[12] Librarians who are intimately involved with the thousands of picture books, juvenile novels and excellent works of nonfiction published annually, lose sleep over these alarming observations. But they also use television and video to promote their objectives:

- Joan Rubin, former Young Adult Librarian at Gates Public Library in Monroe County reports that the Junior Friends Group at the library scripted, cast and produced a video to encourage membership in the organization. The Library Director, Sue Swanton, operated the library's video camera, and the finished product,"The Search for the Perfect Junior Friend," was shared at a regional meeting of Friends in the Monroe County system to demonstrate that Junior Friends are effective library supporters. Several of the characters in the video portrayed candidates whose reactions to the roles they assumed Friends play were less than enthusiastic! Among the group's actual activities were reading to children, assisting with the library's book sale, conducting car washes, bake sales and other fundraisers to enable them to purchase refreshments for an "after-hours" Pizza Party at the library — but one would never guess, judging by the video spoof.[13]

- Eileen Purcell, Children's Librarian at the Delaware Branch of the Albany Public Library, worked with children producing a series of videos focused upon a different author each month. When James and Christopher Collier's *My Brother Sam is Dead* was featured, a fife and drum corps provided a musical introduction, and photographs and other visuals created interest over the length of the 15-minute booktalk program. Eileen also worked on a video production involving children in grades two through five who were recruited in school visits. These children selected favorite books and were filmed presenting two-minute talks that were then screened for them and their parents to see at a reading fair held at the public library.[14]

- When the cost of video for home use became comparable to that of an average adult novel, Outreach Coordinator Pat Stocker at Wayne County Library System began selecting videos along with books, musical recordings, puppets and educational toys and games for the *Books Plus* theme collections that the system loans to families.

- Sari Feldman, of the Onondaga County Public Library designed a series of programs on animation for youth, ages 9-13, for one of its branches, in cooperation with a local community center. The group produced a film as part of the series. Currently, a rap group is participating in a drug awareness series on radio in Syracuse, and Sari sees potential for promotion of library service to youth in rap format.[15]

- In early 1990, in observance of the Centennial of the New York Library Association, a contest was held in the Rochester area to find the most creative demonstration of ways libraries are used. Diane Genovese, President of the Friends of the Marion Public Library recruited neighbors to produce a video in newscast format. A role was created for each child in each family, including an infant and an 11-year-old boy who served as "anchor" on the show. Diane's husband served as film editor, and a neighbor loaned a camera for the filming, which took place in the library. Rochester newswoman Maggie Brooks was one of the contest's judges, and the Marion Public Library video was awarded First Prize. It was shown on Rochester's Channel 10 one day in July.[16]

Much can be accomplished when librarians work in partnership with the talent of television and video. Maurice Sendak, in accepting the first Youth Services Section (New York Library Association) Empire State

Award in Rochester, acknowledged his debt to Walt Disney. Another award winner, Steven Spielberg, said that only a generation of readers will spawn a generation of writers when he collected an Oscar for *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in 1987.[17] The partnership is more than potential, it is real!

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# "IMAGINE IF..." — AN APPRECIATION OF THE PERFORMING ARTS AS AN ENHANCEMENT TO READING

*By Sheldon L. Tarakan*

I've always believed that literature has a life of its own. As a child I read adventure stories and mentally incorporated myself within these stories as either an observer or a participant. *"Imagine if I were the third Hardy boy. Imagine if I were a real character in a Jack London novel. Imagine if...."*

In high school, I became familiar with the great classic writers, and a whole new world opened up to me in the form of powerful images created through the words of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Chekhov and Shaw. *"Imagine if I had been alive during the time of Richard III. Imagine if I, instead of Mark Antony, had delivered the eloquent eulogy at Caesar's funeral. Imagine if I had been Uncle Vanya. Imagine if...."*

While a student of music in college and graduate school, I became increasingly more aware of subtle connections between the various arts, of which literature is, to my mind, the most fundamental. I discovered opera, which relies on a strong libretto to get the story across to the listener; ballet, which depicts stories — many of them folk tales and myths — using incredibly intricate movements; film and drama, which employ visual and verbal techniques to convey a story line. Each of these art forms has literature as its basis. In other words, it all starts with the printed word.

For most of its history, the public library has been a place dedicated to the printed word. Libraries traditionally made books available to those who chose to read them. There was a "reader's advisor" to, as one would infer, advise readers and help them select books for recreational or informational purposes. More recently, libraries have acknowledged a responsibility that moves beyond the original concept of the library as "a storehouse of knowledge." Libraries are now regarded as places where ideas are developed — where imaginations are free to wander, where creativity is encouraged, where young people are given the opportunity to explore new avenues of communication. It still begins with the printed word, but now it goes beyond! It happens in ways like this:

Deborah Rothrock is a "storysinger." Drawing from her repertoire of world folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends, and blending them with songs of many styles and origins, she presents concerts that are a unique and entrancing fusion of story and song. She regards storytelling as the oldest art form in the world, predating wall-painting in caves and other types of hand-drawn communication. "As a balance to the media," she says, "where all the images are programmed, and the viewer takes a passive role, listening to stories can be a powerful creative experience. Most of the story takes place in the imagination of the listener."

Heather Forest, according to an entertainment critic of a major newspaper, "has a way with words...stringing them together so they ring with rhythmic beauty and create a picture so real that it can almost be traced with the fingers." Ms. Forest, a nationally acclaimed storyteller and recording artist, adopts a "minstrel style" of storytelling in which she interweaves original music, movement, poetry and the sung and spoken word. Her programs offer audiences the opportunity to be creative listeners and to appreciate the beauty and magic of the spoken word.

The Corner Store is a dance and theater group whose programs include original dances based on stories, poems and songs. The dances, which are performed in the round, include singing, speaking and live music composed especially for this unique performing group. "Improvised segments expose children to the idea of creative alternatives to conventional structures," says Pamela Finney, founder and artistic director of The Corner Store. "Audience suggestions allow children the opportunity to see their ideas become part of the performance."

Deborah Rothrock, Heather Forest and The Corner Store are three "acts" that have appeared at the Port Washington Public Library as part of a continuing program of reading enhancement activities planned by the Children's Services Division. "We want our children to read," says Corinne Camarata, the library's Head of Children's Services, "but we acknowledge the need to go beyond reading in an effort to challenge the child's imagination, to invite the child to explore new ideas, to entice these young minds with new approaches to literature." To do this, the library regularly engages top performers — not because they are brilliant entertainers, but because they are *de facto* educators as well.

Alice Eve Cohen is another entertainer/educator the library has employed to implement Ms. Camarata's philosophy. She is the artistic director of Practical Cats Theatre Company. Combining language, music, puppetry and movement, Ms. Cohen's players act out myths, folk and fairy tales and original stories, which

results in (according to one reviewer) "total emotional involvement of the audience as the story evolves."

## *Most of the story takes place in the imagination of the listener.*

Patricia Shih uses her own award-winning compositions to introduce young people to real-life issues, such as hunger, peace, brotherhood, respect for the elderly and the disabled, the environment. According to Ms. Shih, "every single person has the power to change the world — using words, actions and attitudes. How we think and behave affects those around us, usually either negatively or positively. The power to change things *positively* can be expressed creatively — through songs, poems, art, films, dance, and so on." In her workshops she encourages children to create poems, stories, plays or songs based on what they heard in her concert.

Stimulating the imagination by using music and other performing idioms as an adjunct to literature is balanced by the use of literature as an enhancement to music. A prominent example is Sergei Prokofiev's enchanting *Peter and the Wolf*, a narrated work in which characters are assigned instrumental voices. There are dozens of fine recordings of this work, but nothing can take the place — or have the impact — of a live performance! The Sylvan Wind Quintet performed this work at the library, and young people were given the opportunity to see close-up the functioning of the *leit motif* technique in music.

Book illustration is the most powerful enhancement to reading ever invented! ; in fact, words themselves are pictures. So it is no mystery that a child naturally gravitates toward books with illustrations. The Port Washington Public Library is fortunate to be located in an area of New York that is home to many creative people, among them several outstanding book illustrators. These artists, including Peter Spier and Jane Breskin Zalben, have "performed" at the library over the years and have inspired many young readers through their art. Additionally, the library periodically sponsors a Children's Book Illustration exhibit, which features work and work-in-progress by illustrators such as Eric Carle, Susan Jeffers, Barry Moser, Richard Egielski, Chris Conover, Bernard Waber, John Wallner, Leo and Diane Dillon, Chris Van Allsburg, Tomie de Paola, Trina Schart Hyman, Paul Zelinsky and Charles Mikolaycak. These artists have contributed much to the enjoyment of books and reading.

These are more than just a string of nifty programs for kids — although they certainly are that. I've attempted to describe an attitude, a philosophy, a total commitment on the library's part to the elevation of literature — indeed, of culture — as a worthwhile human pursuit. The direction in which our society seems to be headed *vis-a-vis* reading and literacy leaves much to be desired. People seem to be reading less, watching TV more, and playing video games even more than that. Carey Ayres, who is responsible for Children's Room programming (and without whose input and advice I could never have written this article) observes that "children today have less and less free time. Their days are filled with highly structured activity topped off with a liberal dose of television viewing. Young imaginations can atrophy under such conditions. I believe that it is vitally important that we provide children with programming that will nurture their ability to 'pretend,' to create and to explore the landscape of the imagination."

## *We all begin to read by looking at pictures.*

How we compete against the seductive (and by some standards, destructive) forces posed by television and video games largely depends upon how well we can counter their effects and market our product to our public. To do this, the commitment must go beyond just trying to offer children education disguised as entertainment. It must encompass the library's overall philosophy of service to its community. Here's a sampling of this library's commitment to the promotion of the arts as a vital and viable library function:

To ensure high quality art exhibitions, the library supports an Art Advisory Council — a group of volunteers, mostly working artists, from Port Washington and surrounding communities — to select and mount monthly exhibitions representing all genres. Among the more prominent artists to have their works exhibited at the library in recent years are Frank Stella, Elaine de Kooning and Charles Burchfield.

Similarly, the library maintains a Music Advisory Council to plan and produce concerts in the library. Among the many notable musicians who have performed at the library in recent years are George Shearing, Eugenia Zukerman, John Browning, Dave McKenna, Elie Siegmeister, Jean Ritchie, Marion McPartland, Johnny Hartman and many others too numerous to mention. When Steinway and Sons, the famous piano makers, needed a place on Long Island to exhibit their landmark 500,000th piano, they selected the Port Washington Public Library, because of the library's excellent track record in providing its community, and the surrounding region, with music.

Photography is another mainstay of the library's artistic repertoire, with monthly exhibitions in a separate, specially designed Photography Gallery. Among

the noted photographers whose works have been seen here are André Kertész, Paul Strand, Minor White and Berenice Abbott. Video artists and filmmakers regularly visit the library under the auspices of the New York State Council on the Arts to show their work and discuss it with their audiences.

If the library's art, music and photography programs seem a bit remote from the world inhabited by our younger patrons, the common thread of commitment binds it all together. A child who learns to exercise his or her imagination will be a more cultured adult. A young person who appreciates the arts, and recognizes the library as the cultural focus of the community, will become a supporter of the arts later on.

I began this article with the words "Imagine if...." That was intentional. While editing the library's monthly newspaper, I came upon an article about a unique performance by Jamie Mymit and his "Imaginarium." Using plastic cartons, aluminum foil, paper plates, fabrics, foam and footstools, Mymit creates wonderful transformations that lead audiences through a world of meaningful themes. I dropped in on the performance (I wasn't the only grown-up there, by the way). I was more than impressed. I was inspired. Here was a demonstration of the most basic use of imagination, tailored perfectly for a child, uncluttered and unencumbered by palettes and podiums, devoid of pretense and posturing. Imagine if all children could see this. Imagine if I were Fenton Hardy's third son. *"Imagine if...."*

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**Sheldon L. Tarakan** *is Director of Public Relations for the Port Washington, NY, Public Library. He is a musician by training, a writer by profession and an arctic explorer in his imagination.*

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# REACHING OUT TO CAPTURE YOUNG MINDS

*By Ellen V. LiBretto*

We have all experienced the "rush," the sense of well-being, that accompanies a "good idea." True creativity gives us a boundless feeling of energy. But we have also all experienced times when no idea comes, when our imaginative muscles become strained. At these times we search our minds for the trigger that will give us that next idea — the spark that will let our imaginations take off. Experience teaches us how to use the stimuli in our environment to our creative advantage. But how can we as librarians create a stimulating and creative climate for our teenaged patrons? This article cites a number of programs and projects from libraries across New York State that librarians can use to cultivate the imaginations of teenagers in the areas of writing, science, performance, dance, painting, and humor.

Beryl Eber, Manhattan Borough Young Adult Specialist in The New York Public Library, engaged Sabra Loomis, a poet, to help teenagers create a poem to be published in *Perspectives*, a magazine published by the Library. Poems called "Autumn," "Driftwood," "Big Sister," and "Guide to Love" allowed the teenagers to express their feelings freely. The published collection serves as a record of the young writers' creative efforts.

Some librarians don't consider comic books a stimulus for encouraging curiosity and developing an understanding of history. Yet Mary Bobear, Reference Librarian at the Sanford Town Library in Loudonville, New York, approached several funding agencies to organize a four-part lecture series called "Comic Books to Graphic Novels: 60 Years of Popular Culture." First, a comic book historian gave a retrospective overview of the comic book heroes who have endured, such as the Shadow and Superman. Then film samples from *Flash Gordon*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Superman, the Movie* were shown, and there was a lecture on how these films impacted the American popular culture of their time. The four-part film/lecture series, which was attended by 180 teenagers, many wearing Dick Tracy tee shirts or Superman costumes, ended with a talk by author-artist Art Spiegelman, who discussed his creation, Maus. Maus is based on the experiences of Spiegelman's father, a survivor of Auschwitz. The teenagers who attended this series stayed after each program to complete evaluation forms, and their general response was that the program was "Awesome!" This is an ideal program for libraries that find it difficult to involve teenage boys. Indeed, the boys (as well as the girls) discovered while attending a program on comic books that comic art has an important place in American social history. Bobear reports that this was an expensive project to implement, since it cost $3,000, but it was well worth the cost and planning time, given the enthusiasm of the participants.

Our imaginations can be sparked by presentations that provide a springboard for social action as well as by artistic presentations that evoke humanistic concerns. For example, as part of the Learning Odyssey Project, Mary H. Cary, Children's Services Consultant in the Finger Lake Library System, used a video documentary entitled *The Dividing Line*, produced by local filmmaker Gossa Tesgaye. It tells how the city's new flood control system resulted in the destruction of Ithaca's West End neighborhood in the 1960s. The film, with a photo exhibit from the DeWitt Historical Society and a display model of the West End as it had been, fueled lively discussion and evoked feelings of loss among many of the participants. A number of teenagers who attended the program heard for the first time that there had once been a community in the area that is now a flood control site bordered by a park.

Other stimulating programs include the following:

- Sandra Payne, Staten Island Young Adult Specialist, planned an eight-session "Comedy Workshop for Teenagers" at the New Dorp (Staten Island) Regional Library. Its purposes were to train aspiring comedians and comedy writers and to help teenagers learn how comedy can be used as a bridge to multicultural appreciation. The group leader invited the Media Maidens (writers and comedians), Michael Bongar (a clown), and Barbara Contardi (president of the Association of Comedy Artists) to share with the teenagers their experiences as professional comedians. Participants were videotaped as they performed their skits. All gained a broader perspective of comedy and of its potential for reaching people.
- Mary Jane Tacchi reports on a multimedia "Environmental Awareness" exhibit planned by teenagers at the Fort Washington Branch of The New York Public Library. The exhibit was a result of a neighborhood-history-and-ecological-issues research project that incorporated paintings, photos, and a video about the early Indian and Dutch settlers in the

area. The student-made video played continuously to enhance the historical and contemporary material on display.

- Sandra Marksberry, Young Adult Specialist at the Queens Borough Public Library, conducted a series of "Meet the Author" workshops. Teenagers were given a book to read and were invited to meet with the author and hear him or her read from a work in progress. Aspiring authors were thus able to share in the creative process by hearing a work of fiction still in draft form. In addition, the authors shared the ups and downs of their experiences as writers. Among the authors the teenagers met were A.M. Homes, author of Jack (MacMillan, 1989), and Jacqueline Woodson, author of Last Summer with Maizon (Doubleday, 1990). Teaming up with the New York Hall of Science in Flushing Meadow, New York, librarians at the Flushing Branch of the Queens Borough Public Library invited teenagers to watch college students enrolled in the Museum's Outreach Education Program demonstrate the dissection of a cow's eye. The teenagers who attended this workshop were wide-eyed as they witnessed scalpel-wielding young scientists exploring a bovine cornea and retina.

Using an event in a neighborhood such as the opening of a long-overdue subway line in a community long neglected by city planners resulted in the painting of a community mural by teenagers at the South Jamaica Branch of the Queens Borough Public Library. Iris Barker, Branch Manager, reports that teenagers created a fantasy environment with a subway appearing as a monorail towering over a country-life setting in a real-life urban environment.

Karlan Sick, Young Adult Specialist in the Bronx, New York, reports on an exciting dance project. Intermediate School 158, located in the South Bronx, has an unusual physical education course, modern dance, whose dancers have performed for delighted audiences in numerous South Bronx branches. The company's director, Kevin Hunt, once danced with Alvin Ailey and has the additional talent of bringing young men into the company after school. One high school student who had been a trouble maker at a local branch was said to have reformed remarkably quickly when he heard that the dance company was coming: Mr. Hunt, the young man knew, would be disappointed to hear anything bad about this former student, and the student wanted to see the dance company perform!

This article is only a brief survey of some of the programs that New York State librarians are using to stimulate the imaginations of their young clientele. Programs such as these are really long-term investments in education planned by librarians who are not looking for instant results. Librarians measure the true success of their efforts not by large attendances or in number of books checked out after the programs but rather by the spontaneous comments ("Awesome!"), the intelligent questions, and the (hopefully) improved behavior of their young patrons. For those librarians who demand instant gratification — peek at the titles carried out of the library the day of a library program. You just might discover that the teenagers are borrowing something other than "sweet dream" romances.

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**Ellen LiBretto** *is Young Adult Services Coordinator at the Queens Borough Public Library.*

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# SETTING THE STAGE

*By Sharon Breen*

The Museum Corner evolved while designing the children's room in the newly renovated Middle Country Library in December 1986. Desiring to create an area for inquisitive children to explore and learn about a variety of subjects, the children's department staff strived for something unique. The Museum Corner is located in a 12,000 square foot children's room that also houses other creative spaces, including an early childhood area, a parenting section, the Book Barge (a boat for seating), a reference study platform, and two computer activity areas. The Museum Corner has become more popular with each new year and with each new exhibit. Though focused on the school-age child, this area attracts the entire family. The arrangement of the space in conjunction with each exhibit encourages children to use their imagination while learning concepts.

Programs and workshops are arranged to correlate with each exhibit. Thursday afternoons are reserved for these special programs, which include hands-on activities, speakers, resource people and entertainment. Some of the most interesting programs included a tea party, a birthday celebration for Zaks, (a construction toy), beach crafts with Brian Heinz and mask making with Lorena Doherty.

Library staff specially designed a variety of materials for each exhibit. Bibliographies on dolls, Native Americans, a coloring book of insects, a space station console, and a beach party bingo board game are just some of the special items that librarians, clerks, pages and teachers have created to bring each exhibit to life. Another popular item was the jungle jeep decked out with backpacks and safari hats, and for another, a dune buggy, painted florescent pink and ready for the youngest beach goer to take a spin in the sand.

## ROOM DESIGN

The Museum Corner occupies a sizeable area within the children's room. There are several tables and chairs and a low counter where children can work. Three large display cases are filled with artifacts specially displayed for children. Large bulletin boards, lining one wall, are used for visual information, posters and drawings. Activities take place throughout the Museum Corner: wall hangings with interconnected activities, a counter using a plexiglass display case as a background filled with objects and instructions, and an abundance of games and realia are open for public use.

Bookshelves with adjustable shelving provide space for books related to each particular exhibit. Hands-on activities contained in clear plastic boxes can also be found on these shelves. Each box is labeled with the name of the activity and instructions.

Movable walls covered with fabric border the Museum Corner space. The walls become part of each exhibit to help create visual effects. Posters, art work, photographs, murals and colorful scenes are created on these walls to help set the story line for each exhibit. For example; they were covered with black felt for a darkening effect for the solar system exhibit. Plastic display boxes can be hung on these walls for additional containers of informational handouts and activities.

## EXHIBITS

Since 1987, the Museum Corner has housed more than eight exhibits. The topics change periodically, usually every four months. The opening exhibit was *Dinosaurs* (January-May 1987), and it proved most popular and enticing for our children. Imported life-size, cardboard dinosaurs came to life with several coats of paint. Books about dinosaurs, puzzles, informational handouts, posters and fossils made up this "first-time" exhibit. What a learning experience for the staff! The original space was too small; with the next exhibit we doubled the area, and the creative ideas flowed.

Striving for professional recognition, we contacted museums both for loans of artifacts and guidance. For our second exhibit *Insects in Their World* (June-September 1987) the Brooklyn Children's Museum, the Vanderbilt Museum and The Museum of Long Island Natural Sciences loaned us professionally arranged boxes of insects and gave us advice on setting up the display. Staff and patrons raised butterflies from caterpillars and observed a "letting go" ceremony outside the library, while an ant farm attracted even the most casual users. Along with insect games, puzzles, card games, and identification games, the staff designed an insect coloring book for visitors to take home. "Ladybugs and Fireflies" and "The All American Bug Show" were programs conducted in conjunction with this exhibit.

*Dolls in History and Literature* (September 1987-January 1988) presented a different approach from the pre-

# MUSEUM

vious exhibits. Classic editions of books were displayed to compliment famous story characters made of cardboard and cloth. Photographs, posters, drawings, and even wrapping paper covered the walls. Miniature rooms designed in small display cases, intermingled with books on book shelves attracted the youngest of children. We opened this exhibit with a tea party as boys and girls arrived with their favorite doll in tow and paraded through the entire library amidst colorful balloons and music.

*The Solar System* (January-September 1988) has been our most visually exciting exhibit to date. Walls were covered with black felt, iridescent cellophane clusters hung from the ceiling, and large papier-mâché planets were suspended across the room. A space station console, complete with flashing lights and a computer keyboard kept the corner buzzing. "Spacelab," a special display from the Long Island Science Museum, provided a slide show about constellations and the Lego space system was completed and set up in a display cabinet.

The popularity and frequency of questions about Native Americans planted the seed for our next exhibit, *Northeast Native Americans* (October 1988-February 1989). With loans from Brooklyn Children's Museum, Suffolk County Historical Museum, the Wilderness Traveling Museum and Garvies Point Preserve, this exhibit was extensive and complete. Following the trail of Northeast Native Americans through informational handouts, bulletin boards, artifacts, and hands-on exhibits, children were able to find many facts relating to their school assignments. They could try on a corn husk mask, rattle an authentic dried gourd originally used as a musical instrument and play Native American games.

From the quiet land of the Native Americans, we transformed the Museum Corner into a jungle of plants, vines and birds. *Summer Safari* (June-October 1989) was an adventure for all ages. Children could take a pretend ride in a jeep, play with the Playmobile Safari set or pet the giant stuffed giraffe purchased specifically for the exhibit.

The Ohio Art Company coordinated our next display, *Zaks!* (October 1989-February 1990). A movable construction toy, Zaks can be used to build sea and land animals, castles, acrobats and funny creatures of the imagination. This exhibit was one of total involvement for the entire family. It was not unusual for the children's librarian to notice a parent engrossed in building an object, while his child was ready for check out at the circulation desk.

Following the activity of *Zaks*, came a sophisticated and beautiful display of *Heads, Masks and Headgear* (February-June 1990). *Summer Seashore* (June-November 1990) was an exhibit that included sea shells, marine animals, seashore games, puzzles, activity sheets, and displays of seashore life. Beach Party Bingo, Beach Crafts, Seashore Surprise, and a Native American's Life at the Seashore were some of the programs offered for schoolage children. Organized in conjunction with the Summer Reading Club, this exhibit ranged over half the children's room. The museum's staff has since compiled an educational kit of activities, which is for sale.

Momentarily we are expecting to install *Light and Optics*, a hands-on science experiment exhibit. There will be several large experiments, installed by Science Plus accompanied by many small activities that can be tried and tried again. We are also planning a Family Science Festival to enhance this display.

## INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY

More than 500 children, parents, teachers and museum educators fill the Children's Services Department every year on May 18 for an after school program to celebrate International Museum Day. Fifteen museums from New York City, Nassau County and Suffolk County are represented with display tables and hands-on educational fun and craft activities. This is a wonderful way to pool all the museums' wealth of resources and come together under one roof for an afternoon of imagination sparking and adventure.

## MUSEUM EDUCATION

Traditionally, museums have commanded a certain reverence that has hindered both children and adults from enjoying the museum adventure. Today, children's museums are viewed as centers for exploration and discovery. In them a child's enthusiasm will expand and become contagious.

In the past few years, hands-on museums and museum education have flourished. These are places that can provide enrichment outside the formal school setting in a neutral, nonjudgmental environment, places for adults to interact with children; places for an enriching family experience. Behaviors, which are a part of the way children act, are the basis for how children's museums are laid out and how exhibits are designed. The Museum Corner is just such an area. Its most unique feature is that it is located in a public library.

Finally, a most precious gift is for those of us who are

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES AT THE MIDDLE COUNTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

*The Parent Child Workshop*. Staffed by a librarian and an early childhood teacher. Community resource professionals are on hand to discuss speech and hearing, physical fitness, nutrition and behavior. Spend time with your child. Play together, create a craft together and meet new people together in an educational and creative environment.

*The Early Childhood Room Workshop*. Broader in scope than The Parent Child Workshop. Specially equipped and designed setting. Activities and issues; art, music, movement, dental health, safety, child behavior. Staffed by a librarian, an early childhood teacher and visiting resource professionals.

*Suffolk Family Education Clearinghouse*. This county-wide family resource center is a one-stop Information Center geared for professionals serving children and families. Youth counselors, social workers, health professionals, guidance counselors, librarians, clergymen, psychologists, teachers and parents find technical support through the Clearinghouse. A library card gives personalized access to print and audiovisual materials related to family life, information and referral to community resources, curriculum and program planning assistance, film screening workshops and even a screening facility. With its focus on the family, Suffolk Family Education Clearinghouse is the connecting link between families and community services.

*The Computer Place*. The Computer Place located at the Cultural Center is a dynamic microcomputer laboratory equipped with IBM PCs. An introductory workshop is taught by trained computer specialists. Completion of the initial workshop entitles anyone ages three and up to use the Library's extensive collection of software during many hours of patron assisted "free time." Special computer workshops are presented throughout the year.

*Parenting Series*. Explores specific topics relating to the physical and mental health of families. Conducted by professionals.

*Sunday Showtime*. Family entertainment featuring professional mime, dance, puppetry, theatrical and musical performances.

grown up to try to remember and respect the unique ways children have of learning. The Museum Corner allows us to become partners in their process of discovering the world.

*Sharon Breen is Children's Librarian and Coordinator of the Museum Corner at the Middle Country Public Library in Centereach, NY.*

**COMING IN** *The Bookmark*

The next issue of *The Bookmark* will focus on papers presented at the New York State Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services, November 28-30, 1990, and other significant library services developments in New York State.

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| Summer 1987 | The Public Library Trustee and Changing Community Needs |

# WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

*By Dave Ross*

Recently the Shenendehowa Free Library (my local library) had a day-long event to celebrate the completion of a renovation and expansion project. I was very honored to be asked to be a speaker as part of this Saturday program. (Just one of the many fringe benefits of being an author/illustrator of picture books). I was pleasantly surprised when our baby-sitter told me she was looking forward to attending my talk because her English teacher was offering his seventh grade students extra credit for attending the speaker's program. I opened my speech by pointing out the irony of the situation. "You're listening to someone who had a D minus average in seventh grade English and now, 30 years later, I'm worth extra credit."

The fact is, I was a mediocre academic student throughout my public school career. (It was not until third grade that I learned to read). Fortunately, I was able to parlay a little ability in art into some successful educational experiences. (Like creating bulletin boards and poster designs). It was only after years of college and graduate school, I realized my early problems with academic subjects was not a learning disability *per se*, but a problem with the modes of learning available at the time. I was a visual learner in an educational environment designed for the benefit of learners who could comprehend the written word.

Another fringe benefit of my profession is being hired to perform school assembly programs and conduct workshops for students and staff. (There is also some irony here; a former class clown like myself, receiving monetary rewards for actions and antics that used to get me sent out in the hall). Typically, the setting of a school visit is an elementary library or cafetorium (libraries have better acoustics). The students file in and sit squirming Indian style on the floor waiting with wide eyes to hear a real live author/illustrator. For many, this is the first realization that a living, breathing human is responsible for what goes into a book. I take very seriously the responsibility I have to motivate their young minds and inspire their imaginations. (But there is no reason this can't be fun). Ever mindful of my previous problems with educational format, I try to make each presentation as broadly based as possible. I draw pictures and show examples of prepublished material to include both verbal and visual information content (and it's sprinkled with liberal doses of humor).

Here is what I tell them: "You are looking at perhaps the world's worst speller. For example, I once misspelled some words on the hand lettered cover of a book I was illustrating. The title of the book was *Ghastly Ghostly Riddles* (Scholastic Magazine for the Lucky Book Club 1977) written by Gloria Milkowitz. In addition to misspelling part of the title (Gastly), I misspelled the author's name (Glora). Fortunately, the editor caught the mistakes, but I had to redo the entire cover."

I use this story to point out how easy it is to get lost in creating a drawing and how important it is to share your work at every stage as a way of making sure you're on the right track. As one of the first steps in making art work for a picture book, an illustrator creates a rough drawing for each page. These are usually assembled into a dummy, which is a mockup of the book (not a nickname for the illustrator). The dummy is reviewed by the editor and the art director. Their comments and criticisms help the illustrator shape the final illustration (and eliminate silly mistakes).

Often times this editorial process can be as humorous as some of the drawings. I once spent 45 minutes talking on the telephone with an art director about a cover design that showed a rabbit holding a rather perturbed looking half-eaten carrot. The art director was looking at three sketches that were being considered for this design. She liked one of the sketches better than the others, but she was having a hard time articulating what she wanted. The best she could do was, "drawing number three might work, but the carrot doesn't look

unglued enough." I asked her, "How do you draw an unglued carrot?" The art director replied, "If I could draw one, I'd show you."

This points out a problem many educators have in teaching creativity. Often times we ask for creative solutions without having a clear idea of what we want or how to help a student achieve that goal. This is not to say that any creative solution is acceptable. Editors (and for that matter, educators) need to keep a sharp eye out for those that are inappropriate. If a drawing offends or portrays a stereotypical image then some subtle editorial input may be necessary. That's why my mother got edited out of *A Book of Hugs*. (T.Y. Crowell 1980).

While I was preparing the dummy for the "Hug Book," I decided to feature my Mom as the "Grandmother Hug" (after all, she was short, chubby, had white hair and looked like a Grandma). Since many of my Grandmother hugs were had in the kitchen, that is what I drew. My editor however, objected to the stereotypical portrayal (of both the Grandmother and her location). I explained my reasons for wanting that particular image and she proposed a compromise. "You can keep the Grandmother in the kitchen," she said, "But we need to show a younger, more swing looking Grandma!" So with a tear in my eye, I redrew a more slender, stylish lady with her glasses hanging around her neck on a chain, the ultimate swinging Grandma (but definitely not my mother).

One of the artifacts that I share with my young audiences is a series of sketches and the finished art work for one page out of *Baby Bear's Christmas*, (William Morrow and Company, 1985). I use this sequence of drawings to demonstrate visual brainstorming and how an illustration evolves from its earliest and roughest form through several revisions (including some from the art director) to the final product, the painting that will be reproduced in the book. I point out the parallels between this process and the drafting process in writing. I show them how I sketched all the action of the story before I wrote the text (a very useful method for any visual thinker). By seeing these intermediary steps, the students have a better understanding of the development of ideas (both visual and written). These are important concepts for elementary aged children. Many tend to think the wonderful words and images they see in books come full blown from their creators (and almost magically) directly onto the pages of books.

I would ask librarians who deal with young readers (and nonreaders) to look at their collection of picture books in a new light. Be aware that these books are useful tools in reaching children with a variety of learning styles. Make use of any prepublished materials you might have or visual aides (like Steven Kellog's filmstrip on the making of the *Island of the Skog*) to demystify and humanize children's perception of books. Above all: encourage their creative endeavors to communicate using visual, verbal and written formats. And hey, lighten up on those class clowns; you could be cataloging their books one day!

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**Dave Ross** *is an artist, author and educator. He has written and illustrated more than 30 books for young readers. He lectures on children's literature and creative writing and has served as a special consultant to the New York State Education Department and to the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.*

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# MAGIC MIRRORS

*By Bruce Coville* © 1990

A year or so ago I was telling a group of third-graders a story of mine called "The Box." As the tale moved to its conclusion, in which the now-aged hero, Michael, met again the angel he had seen only once, as a child, I realized that the teacher of the class was beginning to weep. Though her tears came gently at first, by the time the tale was over she was sobbing almost uncontrollably.

While I think that I tell well, and that "The Box" is a wonderful story, this teacher's reaction was not so much a compliment to me as it was proof, if proof be needed, that the right story at the right moment is an arrow to the heart. It can find and catch what is hiding inside the reader (or the listener), the secret hurt or anger or need that lies waiting, aching to be brought to the surface.

And of all the stories we can tell, this power is most typical of the wonder tale, which invites us into a world where the rules of reality are changed, and by thus sundering us from everyday life, lets us see truth in a new way.

In fact it is a paradox inherent in good fantasy that the further it takes us from everyday reality, the more deeply it moves us into our own truths. Or, as Joseph Campbell once phrased it, "where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence."[1]

This happens partly because writers of fantasy have greater license to deal with truth than do those who write stories about what we suppose to be the real world. Certainly we are deeply affected by the things that exist outside of us. But the interior truths created by that exterior "reality" are different for each of us. So when we describe the world as it is, we capture truth at only the most superficial level.

It is important to understand that "real" world. But if we are to undertake the more important task of understanding ourselves, we must move inward. And that journey, as any reader of tales can tell you, has always required a guide.

This is one function of the wonder tale. It is the Vergil that can guide us into — and out of — our personal Infernos, taking the listener by the hand (or by the scruff of the neck) to point out inner truths both grim and glorious.

Now this is not necessarily the intent of the writer during the creation of the story. I know that while I sometimes have a point I wish to make while I am writing a story, such stories are usually either devilishly difficult to write, or deadly dull to read.

More often the meaning of the story announces itself to me as I am writing. Indeed, there are times when I don't figure out what the thing was about until well after I am done. (It took me years to understand that the hero of my book *The Monster's Ring* was based not only on a child in my fourth grade classroom who I thought needed a chance to become a monster, but also on my own adult self, who needed to learn to control his temper.)

While that moment of revelation when I discover a story's meaning is exciting ("Ah, so *that's* what I was getting at!"), even more exciting is the fact that it really doesn't make any difference what I think the story is about.

The reason for this is simple. If the story has any validity, and if it finds any kind of a readership, it is going to mutate, and become about all kinds of things that I never anticipated.

I discover one truth as I write. The reader is free to discover another truth entirely, one utterly different from my own. This can happen because literature is not a thing, but a process. When a good writer and a good reader meet on the page (or in the ear) what occurs is not merely a communication from the writer to the reader, but a collaboration, wherein the writer provides a tale out of which the reader conjures characters, events, ideas, sometimes an entire world — a world specifically appropriate to his or her needs at that time.

This conjuration can happen with all stories, of course, but it is particularly true of the wonder tale. Indeed, if we have any doubt of the power held by these stories, we need only look at the fear they engender — for one good measure of a thing's power is the degree to which people fear it.

By this measure the assaults on fantasy being mounted by the current crop of would-be censors make it clear that they find the literature of the fantastic at least as frightening as they find sex, which is very frightening indeed. Only this week a school board had to beat back an attempt to have C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* removed from the school library because, said the parents who brought the complaint, they contain "graphic violence, mysticism and gore." I have heard my own fantasies pilloried not for what I have written (because the critics freely admitted they had not read the stories) but simply because they were fantasies, and as such were "dangerous" for children.

I could provide endless examples of such nonsense. But I think it is more important to ask, "What are these people afraid of?"

The answer is contained in St. John's adage "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free."

For the hallmark of the best imaginative literature is that it opens a door to the partaker's own internal truths.

This discovery of personal truth is a liberating thing. And for those who are wedded to control, who believe that humans are basically wicked and need a crushing number of rules and regulations to keep them on the straight and narrow, the liberated human spirit is a terrifying thing indeed. Thus fantasy, which provides truth and liberation, is the enemy.

An example: In my children's science fiction story "My Teacher Is an Alien" (science fiction is fantasy's firstborn child), three youngsters become involved with an alien who is out to kidnap a handful of earth children. At the end of the tale one child, Peter, chooses to go with the alien, leaving home to venture off to the stars.

I chose to have this happen mostly because I thought it made a good ending to the tale. (From my point of view sometimes the most effective ending to a story does not wrap up the tale, but leaves you open to wondering and speculation.) However for this ending to work, it was necessary that Peter feel free to go. So I made it clear in the story that he was the child of a single parent who was singularly neglectful of him.

*The further good fantasy takes us from everyday reality, the more deeply it moves us into our own truths.*

I have since learned that when the book is read in classrooms, Peter's decision to leave often becomes a matter of considerable discussion. Some children think it was awful of him to go; others think that he was right to do so. I didn't realize the significance of this until a teacher told me that the children's opinions regarding Peter's decision provided a startlingly accurate picture of their home lives.

Let us be daring now, and speak a dangerous truth.

Here it is —

*Not all parents are deserving of love.*

This sad fact represents muddy water indeed for the child, because it is a thing both true, and in polite company unacceptable. The child is not supposed to have the right to not love the parent. Which means that what was for me a plot point becomes for some members of my young audience a revelation: I'm not the only one who doesn't love my father (or mother, as the case may be).

Now this is not a thought our society wants to allow a child. But if the truth is that the parent is not lovable, then what liberation for the child to glimpse, even for a moment, the thought, "I don't have to love them." However, this is quite frightening for the adult who thinks he or she might not be lovable. Indeed, the fearful will proclaim my story is putting ideas into children's heads. This is not true. The story merely frees some children to face a truth generally not allowed them, and the only parents who have anything to fear from it are ones who probably should not have had children to begin with.

I do not mean to imply that the truths to be found in stories are all negative. The truth may be the sudden realization "I am lovable." It may be "I have power" or "I do not need to fear this thing" or "Well, if I want to get on in the world I had better stop hitting everyone I get mad at."

The story is simply a vehicle to the child's (and the adult's) own truths — the magic mirror in which we can sometimes glimpse what we have held hidden from our own heart.

And the wonder tale is the best vehicle for this because when it pulls us into a world where the rules of reality as we know them are changed it lets us see truth in a new way, and hear the sweet song of possibility sung in a key that can open doors as yet undreamed.[1]

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**Bruce Coville** *is a playwright, television writer and producer. He is a former teacher and has contributed to many professional journals. He has written over 20 books for children. His latest,* Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher, *is scheduled for release by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in spring 1991.*

# POETRY: "THE COLOR OF WONDERS"

*By Susan A. Katz*

Over the past 15 years, I have been conducting poetry workshops for children, young adults, adults, and senior citizens, in library and school settings. I have been working with children too young to read and write, and with senior citizens who have lost their ability to read or write. But the *need* and *desire* to speak, and be heard, is always present. Poetry provides an outlet for this need, by reducing the creative process down to its basic component: the word. And the words, through the years, flow from the mouths and pens of budding students of poetry with an urgency and an intensity that is both startling and immeasurably rewarding.

Perhaps the greatest possible source of inspiration for writing or speaking one's own poetry is reading and sharing the poetry of others. Many people, young and older alike, come to poetry with the misconception that it will be impossible to comprehend. Libraries and schools have the unique opportunity to dispel this myth by opening wide the "doors" to poetry through the works and words of master poets of today and yesterday. The lines and stanzas of many of the great works, we discover, were, and are, crafted with words of common usage, and are clear and easily understood. "Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud! / I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" ( — Percy Bysshe Shelley; "Ode to the West Wind") "I have eaten/the plums/that were in/the icebox//and which/you were probably/saving/for breakfast//Forgive me/they were delicious/so sweet/and so cold. ( — William Carlos Williams; "This is Just to Say") And in these "everyday" words, we find messages and meanings that inspire, enrich and reinforce our own lives. We find, as well, that we have within us the language of poetry.

It is not uncommon, when introducing the subject — "poetry" — to receive a less than enthusiastic reception. Particularly when student participation is mandatory, the introduction of the poet could easily be (and often is) greeted with a collective moan. I have faced some skepticism when I inform a class that poetry is fun and can be about any subject from baseball to ballet. Frequently, a number of students are unconvinced and begin the workshop reluctantly, insisting that they "...won't like (reading) poetry" and "...can't write it, either."

There was, for example, the third grader who struggled through a workshop on colors, insisting that she could not create an image (using her five senses) for the color blue. For almost forty minutes the group discussed colors and described them through sensory imagery: "Blue tastes like a blueberry," Blue feels soft as the sky," Blue smells like the ocean," "Blue sounds loud like thunder," "Blue looks like a rainy day." "Blue is lonely as a frozen pond in winter." As the workshop approached its final moments and we were about to read our "imagery poem" aloud, the "inhibited" student's hand went up. "Blue," she said, "is the color of wonders." What a rush of inspiration was borne on the wind of that single image. "Wonders" and all their myriad implications and possibilities became the focus for future workshops, and the student who "could not" create an image had, in fact, created a whole kaleidoscope of images with a single word.

Through poetry and poetry workshops children discover that language is alive and animated. That words, selected one at a time, are tools that can be made to "work" for them, filling the air with the smell of flowers, or the eyes with the colors of rainbows and, most especially, the mind with an unending panorama of possibility. Through reading and listening to the work of other poets and sharing their own work aloud during workshop time, students begin to "hear" and recognize the sound of poetry. They recognize, as well, that poetry has musical and visual implications and can be expanded or further explored through music and art. Here, then, are other creative areas that could (and should) easily and effectively be developed through workshops in a library (or school) environment. In the library setting, are all the resources needed to reach out in ever-widening circles of creative discovery. Workshop leaders need to encourage participants to view the workshop as a beginning, or springboard, from which they may move on, utilizing the resources available to them on their own time and through their own initiative.

The very nature of poetry, requiring that we create our visions using the fewest possible words, placed in the best possible order, demands a commitment to language greater, perhaps, than in any other form of writing. Student workshop members need to be taught how to read poetry, exploring form and the elements necessary to "make" a poem — a poem. They need to understand that poetry is sensory and that imagery is an essential part of every poem. By learning to be astute and critical readers of poetry; they begin to assimilate the skills needed to write their own poetry; thereby attaining a greater grasp of language and improving

communication skills. The library offers a limitless supply of books and tapes for students to draw upon. Bringing poems back to the workshop provides a fertile field for discussion and, not uncommonly, controversy. "Master" poems are read, discussed and analyzed — opinions may differ, inspiring further reading, exploration and workshop discussion — interpretations may be as varied (and as valid) as the number of students participating in the workshop.

By planning workshops that encourage the critical scrutiny of the written word, we are encouraging students to develop their "taste" for poetry. By asking them to bring back to the workshop a poem or poems that they particularly like or dislike, that they feel is a particularly good example of imagery, or alliteration, etc., we propel them towards a comfortable relationship with the language that is the essence of poetry. These preliminary introductions to poetry, through the poetry of others, builds confidence and a greater willingness to commit one's own ideas to the page or, verbally, to the group.

Students learn selectivity, seeking to energize their writing through the use of adjectives and juxtaposition of words on the page. They begin to unravel the delights to be found in the crafting of metaphors and similes, the use of onomatopoeia, alliteration, hyperbole, animation, internal rhyme, etc. They forget that they are writing poetry and become entranced with the process, seeking to find resemblances that will enhance their images. "Trees stand tall and straight as soldiers," "Trees are bare-boned skeletons, shivering in the wind." "The wind howls (or growls or whines or snorts) like a hungry wolf...." — the choices are endless and the ultimate selection leaves an indelibly individual imprint on the poem — the poet — and the audience. And the poem, crafted line by line, given as a gift through sharing, becomes a memorable and meaningful, creative learning experience.

This alone would seem to be a valid reason for libraries and schools to undertake the sponsorship of poetry workshops. However, the workshop may be at its most effective when it is planned in concert with specific community and/or school needs or events. I have found that the most successful workshops are those with clearly defined goals and a specific focus. In one series of workshops that I conducted, at a local library as a poet-in-residence, we attempted to discover, through poetry, ways to bridge the gap between generations. Through a grant proposal and support funding by Poets and Writers, Inc., we planned and conducted preliminary workshops with individual age groups (young adult, adult, senior citizen) and then followed up with intergenerational workshops where workshop poets shared their poems aloud. The response (one age group to another) was dramatic and it was discovered, through the words and lines of the poems, that age did not dictate a difference in need or desire, fantasy or fear, longing or loneliness. From the youngest to the oldest participant, parallels in meaning and imagery could be drawn from the poems, and the separating generational lines, that we presupposed, were nonexistent. An evening of "Poetry Under The Stars," presenting group and individual poems, culminated this series of workshops.

In another instance, a neighborhood school was undergoing significant disruption during a building extension project. The principal, PTA and school board wanted to lessen the impact of the disruption and make the experience meaningful for the students. It was decided, as part of this goal, to bring a poet into the school (through Poets in Public Service, Inc.) and have the students write about their feelings and reactions. The all-school focus became "this is my world." Students explored the impact of extending the building and the disruption it caused from personal, environmental, and communal points of view. The students brought in articles from local newspapers, made bulletin boards, presented a poetry/music assembly, and ultimately "published" their school poetry anthology (through the generosity of a local printer) and sold copies to parents and community members as a school fund raiser. Each student received a copy of the anthology and a copy was placed, permanently, in the library. Culminating workshop activities *should* be an integral part of the planning and funding of workshops as they often become the stimulus for further, highly individualized, inspiration.

In those cases, where funding is not available for a series of workshops, a single poetry reading (with time for a follow-up discussion and question-answer period) could be arranged. Visiting poets could possibly bring autographed copies of some of their own poems, giving students an opportunity to take home a tangible bit of the experience. At the time of the reading, the poet could suggest books of poetry that students might enjoy reading. When reading for a young audience it might be wise for the poet to share some children's poetry, as well. It has been my experience that children are especially receptive to, and stimulated by, the poetry of children. And, since this type of poetry is often difficult or impossible to find in bookstores, libraries and school libraries are the primary source.

It would be unrealistic to imply that funding for workshops is easy to come by. However, local artists, libraries, schools, parents and community members working together can, often, overcome the shortage of funds. Before contacting organizations for possible funding or joint funding (such as: New York State Council on the Arts; Poets and Writers, Inc., Poets in Public Service, Inc., Teachers & Writers), preplan every detail of the proposed workshop. Very often, it is the simplest of problems that, unthought of, defeats the project. For example, if you are planning a library workshop for children or senior citizens, an appropriate meeting time

## ORGANIZATIONS THAT WILL SUPPORT POETRY AND WRITING PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

**POETS IN PUBLIC SERVICE, INC.**

Myra Klahr, Director
One Union Square, Suite 612
New York, NY 10003
(212) 206-9000

Writing workshops (school or library) can be jointly funded by PIPS and the school and/or library. Library workshops could be held in series and could be planned to include sibling and parent writing workshops. Schools could consider culminating their in-school workshops with a poetry reading at a local library. They will supply poets and writers from their participating professionals.

**POETS AND WRITERS, Inc.**

72 Spring Street
New York, NY 10012-4019
(212) 226-3586

Poets and Writers encourages applications from new sponsors and give priority to sponsors who feature a variety of writers, sponsors presenting literary programs in rural or traditionally underserved areas of New York State and sponsors whose activities present a wide range of community involvement.

**NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS**

915 Broadway
New York, NY 10010
(212) 614-2900

The Council is interested in the sponsorship of writers (through writers-in-residence programs) that will serve a community need. NYSCA will sponsor individual readings. Deadline for grant applications is March 1st. Apply for funding c/o literature program.

**TEACHERS & WRITERS**

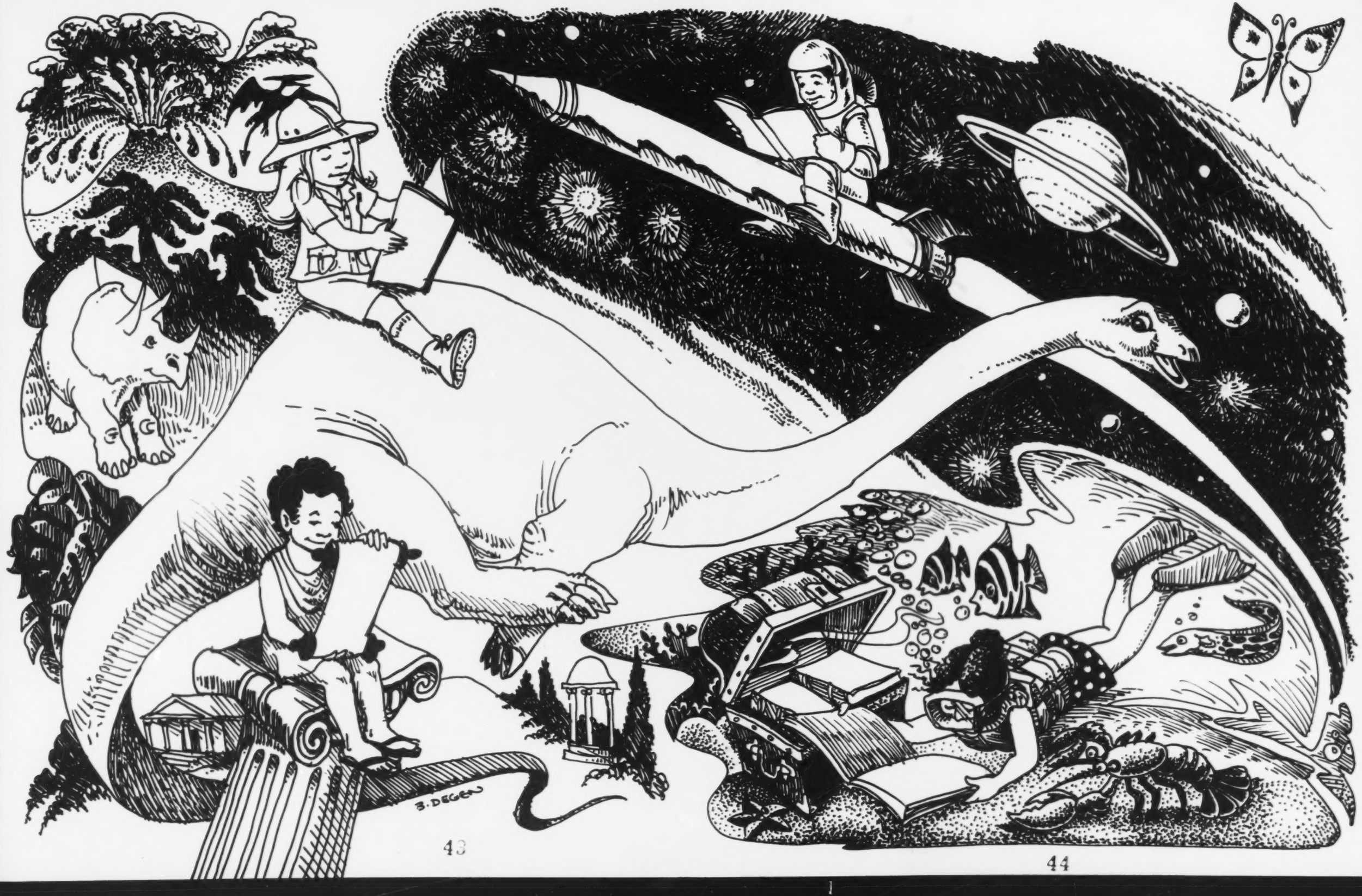
Elizabeth Fox
5 Union Square West
New York, NY 10003
(212) 691-6590

Teachers & Writers will share with the library the cost of a writer-in-residence program and will supply, from listed writers, a writer to fill the specific need of the library. Requests for funding are handled on a first come-first served basis.

**CHILDREN'S WRITINGS**

Poets in Public Service, Inc. (see first entry in this box) has published the following collections of children's poetry by children:

*Gravity is With Me*
*An Unfinished World*
*Ain't Nobody Gonna Slow Me Down*
*Just Talking*
*Just Born Poems, Vol. 5*
*Wandering Thoughts*
*A Gift Mysterious*
*Now I Want to Live*
*Between is the Open Space*
*Through the Dark Light*
*Silent Words*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and transportation become critical elements. Make sure that funding for transportation is figured into your proposal and that you have chosen a time (and place) that will be convenient for both age groups. What funding is available will ultimately go to the best and most carefully researched request.

Many years ago, as a relatively new teacher-poet working under the auspices of Poets in Public Service, Inc., I walked into a fourth grade class. One of the students, upon hearing we were to discuss poetry, turned his chair around and sat down with his back facing forward. Needless to say, it was a humbling experience. I proceeded to conduct the workshop without mentioning that I was aware of, or disturbed by the actions of the student. For almost 45 minutes we discussed the elements of poetry, and practiced creating images. At the completion of the discussion, the class was instructed to write their feelings about poetry. When it came time to read the poems aloud, much to my surprise, my "disgruntled" student, still facing the back of the room, raised his hand. I asked him if he wanted to read his poem to the class and he said he had only one image but he would like to read it. The image he read was the following: "Mrs. Katz asking me to write poetry makes me feel like the inside of a rat's mouth. My teeth want to taste blood." It was by far the most profound and complete image anyone read that day, or in the days that followed. It led us to a discussion of what poetry was all about and when was a good time to read a poem or write a poem. That class, during those workshops, determined that poetry is about anything and everything. It is about anger and complacency, love and hate, joy and sorrow, success and failure — and that anytime is a good time to read or write a poem. And "angry" Freddie, he of the "rat's teeth" imagery, became my most inspired and inspiring student. In a few short words he had summed up the essence of the creative experience; he had felt, and let the words flow through him to the page and anger became accomplishment and words, simple and succinct, became the "color of wonders."

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## IF I FOLLOW THE LINES OF MY HAND

If I follow the lines of my hand,
it will take me to Hollywood.
If I follow the lines of my hand,
I can hear my heart beating.
It sounds like a giant coming near!
If I follow the lines of my head
It will take me back to Beauty Wood
and I will be as beautiful as I am new.
If I follow the lines of my hand,
I'll be like Madonna.
If I follow the line of my hand,
My asthma will go away!

***—Sabrina***

— reprinted with permission from *Just Born Poems, Volume Five, An Anthology of Poetry Written by the Children at St. Mary's Hospital, Bayside, NY,* Poets in Public Service, Inc., 1990.

# CURIOSITY CANCELED

*By Stephanie S. Tolan*

*Censorship* is a dirty word in our culture. It conjures visions of repressive regimes, intellectual cowardice and rigidity. We "enlightened people" — writers, teachers, librarians — understand its dangers and stand foursquare against it. Censorship is an activity someone else engages in, someone who doesn't understand the value of freedom of expression, who fears ideas, who wishes to control, for personal purposes, what other people read or see, hear or learn.

At the same time, those of us who work with children wish to be sure that they are protected from harm, that they are given wholesome intellectual nourishment. We understand that children lack experience with which to judge ideas. They are more vulnerable than adults to manipulation and misinformation. They are immature and so unready to cope with certain aspects of human life and culture.

For these reasons we are often tempted to "guide" their reading. Books are chosen carefully; those that might raise difficult questions are avoided. Then, categories are created — books for the very young, books for older children, books for young adults and books for adults — and children are sent, according to their ages, only to the appropriate stacks. In some libraries children are not even permitted entry into the adult section.

Of course this isn't *censorship*, we say. This is responsible consideration of the vulnerabilities of children. Of course.

When I began school in the late 1940s, my mother (like most mothers of the time) did not believe in questioning school authorities. If I had a problem with a teacher, she would first suggest that I must have done something to deserve whatever treatment I was complaining about and then say that adults were deserving of respect no matter what they did. She simply would not intervene on my behalf — until the day in second grade when the school librarian refused to let me check out *The Chinese Ink Stick*. I had read the first chapter during library period and fallen in love with it. The book was fat and orange, as I recall, and I had found it on the shelf marked *Grade Eight*.

That was the rub. I was seven years-old and the book was for 13-year-olds.

In all my years of school, that was the only time my mother argued with an authority. She took me and the book to confront the librarian. "Why did you keep my daughter from checking out this book?" she asked in a steely voice.

"It's an eighth grade book," the librarian explained. "Stephanie is a second-grader; she can't read it."

My mother opened the book in the middle. "Read!" she commanded. "Out loud."

I read — the whole page. Then we checked the book out and took it home.

The issue for that librarian was merely reading skill, not the controversial ideas and images which might be found between the covers of a book. But the confrontation illustrates an underlying distrust of the developing human mind that leads many of today's teachers and librarians to choose only noncontroversial titles and then to segregate books by age range or grade level to keep children from "inappropriate reading."

I've often wondered what damage my school librarian thought might be done by my encounter with *The Chinese Ink Stick*, whether I had the skill to read it or not. If I had been unable to read it, if I could only take it home and look at the few elegant, spare, oriental illustrations, what harm would that have done? (The truth is, I remember those illustrations better than I remember the story, though vestiges of story do remain, these forty years later.) What was the point of her denying me that book? What vital principle was she upholding?

Children can fall in love with a book, a character, a picture, an idea, even a word. They may not understand it perfectly, but that doesn't stop them from falling in love. Nor does it keep the book or idea or word from having a value in their lives, from fulfilling a genuine need.

My mother read *David Copperfield* aloud to my sister and brother and me the next year, when I was eight. I fell in love then, too, with the young David, with Betsy Trotwood and Micawber. I hated, quite deliciously, the obsequious Uriah Heep (so deliciously that many years later, at the Dickens House in London, it was the hand-painted wall mask of Heep I bought, over all the others available). I did not fully understand that book, or even those characters, when I was eight, but they have lived with me ever since. I sometimes think I am a writer today because of that encounter with Dickens when I was young enough to fall in love with the world and people he created, the images he evoked, the

bits of story I could understand and the sounds of the words.

## *Children want to sample whatever catches their attention.*

The human mind is ravenous, especially in childhood, when everything is still new. Children are bundles of curiosity, seeking nourishment and fulfillment. When we deny them access to books, to images, to ideas, we shut down that curiosity. Do it often enough, and we may shut it down forever. Give them the simple, the safe, the bland, and they may spend their lives unable to go beyond, to the realms where the mind is challenged and complicated, paradoxical reality is confronted.

Children, unaware of our categories, want to sample whatever catches their attention. There is less danger to them in this sampling than we may believe. If what they encounter in their wide-ranging exploration meets some need, they will incorporate it; if it doesn't, they will discard it. If what they encounter frightens them or disturbs them, they can either put it down or ask for help understanding or coping with it.

When my son was in the fourth grade, his class read *Call of the Wild*. After he took the test that marked the end of that unit, he admitted to me that he had begun, but never finished the book. "Terrible things happen to animals," he explained. "I couldn't handle it." He needed no one to protect him from that book, those images. He rejected them on his own.

This isn't to suggest that no harm can come to children through books and images. For instance, it may be true, as many feminists suggest, that reading old-fashioned fairy tales leads girls and boys alike to the belief that boys are brave and active while girls are vulnerable and passive, that girls need rescuing and boys must ride into the world wearing armor and carrying a raised sword. The answer is not to keep children from reading fairy tales. The answer is to talk about those tales, to share the historical context, to compare the world in which they were created with the world of today.

Adults need to be unafraid of ideas themselves and willing to share and discuss them with children. We can, in this way, help children develop the intellectual experience that will make them safe from manipulation and misinformation. Then there will be no need for even the most well-meaning censorship.

Libraries are places where curiosity should be encouraged, nourished, revered — where ideas, however controversial, should be discussed. The human mind is our species' greatest asset. In libraries its varied accomplishments are stored between the covers of books. Children should be welcomed and encouraged to indulge their curiosity while it is at its height. By providing that welcome and encouragement, libraries can help to assure the world a continuing supply of open, free and questing minds. At this point in human history we need such minds more than ever before.

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# LEARNING THROUGH IMMERSION

*By Valorie J. Beard*

Textbook publishers are jumping on the "whole language" bandwagon with prepackaged materials. This worries me because their materials, designed to be used in a whole language classroom, may prove to be the demise of "whole language," an important learning philosophy. It is important to understand that whole language is based on reseach regarding the way young children acquire language. It is a philosophy, not a program, technique or even a method. The whole language philosophy is that language learning depends on an integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking. In a whole language program, language learning is not separated into isolated subskills, but reading, writing, listening and speaking are interrelated and presented in a meaningful context.

We know that learning a second language as an adult is a difficult and complex task. Yet millions of young children take on this task each day. By the age of five or six, they have mastered the most complicated aspects of the task. They did not learn to talk by practicing isolated subskills. They learned to talk because they were immersed in meaningful and purposeful language. They were bombarded by millions of examples of spoken language. The whole language philosophy believes that just as toddlers learn to talk by being immersed in language, a child's literacy development is best facilitated when they are immersed in reading, writing and speaking. Reading, writing and speaking are no longer addressed as isolated subskills, but are now interrelated and a natural part of every lesson.

Although there is no pat formula that operates in a whole language classroom, there are certain principles common to all. First of all, these classrooms are child-centered rather than teacher-centered. The teacher's role shifts from someone who directs the learning to someone who facilitates learning and helps children enrich their experiences. Whole language teachers continually work at structuring an environment in which learners engage in purposeful activities.[1]

Within this child-centered classroom there are no fixed ability groups. Groups are flexible and formed largely by interest rather than by ability. Children are encouraged to interact and work cooperatively. The environment fosters conversations because it is seen as a way to facilitate reading, writing and thinking.

Whole language classrooms are places where teachers have moved beyond formula teaching. They have begun to question assumptions about learning and are examining instructional practices. They are taking control of their own learning and entering a collaborative venture with their student. The students and teachers are implicated in each others learning.

Whole language classrooms encourage writing from day one. Children are given time to write daily. Writing no longer fits into two 30-minute periods a week, but is now a logical part of each lesson and subject discipline. The process of writing is as important as the end product. Children take ownership of their writing and soon see themselves as authors. One second-grader started a letter to Patricia Reilly Giff:

> Dear Patricia Reilly Giff,
> I am also an author. I have written two books. I think you would like them....

Finally and possibly most importantly, whole language classrooms immerse children in print. Children are continually exposed to models of good written language. They no longer deal only with vocabulary controlled texts. They are flooded with good literature (fiction, nonfiction, poetry), magazines and newspapers. Research now proves that the more literature children are exposed to and the earlier they are exposed, the better their reading scores.[2] Children no longer need to master a set of subskills before they read a story. The teacher starts with a whole story and then moves to specific parts such as words, phrases or sounds. This does not mean that phonics isn't taught, but it is taught in context. As with writing, the process is emphasized and readers are encouraged to evaluate themselves and the text before they begin to read, during the reading of the text and after completing the text.

Given the emphasis on good literature, in what kinds of literary experiences might a child in a whole language classroom be engaged? In all classrooms you would find children being read to. The read aloud time would not be limited to a 15-minute period after recess, but would occur throughout the day and in all subject disciplines. Children would hear not only stories, but a variety of nonfiction and poetry. Reading aloud from various genres provides children with the opportunity to explore different written conventions before they read or write them.

The shared book experience seen in many primary whole language classrooms is a teaching tool that is a structured form of reading aloud. The teacher selects a story that is appealing, has a predictable story line and a structure that contains rhyme, a rhythm or repetitive language. Many books used in the shared book experi-

ence are enlarged books or "big books." After the book has been read once for sheer pleasure, it is reread and the children are encouraged to participate in the reading. They notice certain conventions of books or print or are introduced to certain reading strategies. The shared book may be reread several times over the course of a week and is made available for children to read independently.

Children will also spend blocks of time engaged in independent reading. This is a silent reading period where children may be reading a book related to a theme, genre or author study or a book of their own choosing. Charlotte Huck stated it simply, "If we want children to become readers — to know the power of literature — we have to give them the time to become readers."[3]

The time spent in independent reading should at times lead to in-depth literature studies and critical reading. During this time, children are engaged in reading, rereading and discussing a book with a small group. These small groups may be discussing the same book or books related to a theme. They may result in further study of an author. These discussions help children enrich their reading experiences and help them develop ways to respond to a text.

As the small group discussions encourage children to respond orally to what they've read, reading journals or response journals are ways for children to react to a text in writing. Entries in such journals are not trite answers to questions generated by the teacher, but individual reactions to the text. These reactions may include predictions, character analysis, questioning of the way a character handled a situation or the reader's connection to a situation. The possibilities for response are endless and, because the response is individual, it is intrinsically more creative. Children use their imaginations to step into the text and relate to the character. Children are made to take responsibility for their own learning.

As exciting as working in a whole language classroom is, whole language teachers encounter problems. The first is not always present, but when it is, it is difficult to overcome: the lack of administrative support. To help teachers move toward a whole language philosophy, principals and administrators need to encourage teachers to take risks, provide time and money for in-service training, help set up networks for colleague sharing and support and be willing to examine their own beliefs about learning and teaching.

A second problem can arise when parents don't understand the philosophy. Therefore, whole language teachers need to provide parents with knowledge and opportunities for involvement in the classroom. As parents come to understand the process their fears turn into support.

Librarians can help teachers overcome a third problem — that of filling classrooms with books, magazines and other printed material. Teachers need to replace basal readers with real books, but may not have the budgets to do so. I see several ways libraries and librarians can support teachers. Classrooms could actually house certain collections at certain times and become subdivisions of the library. So a class that becomes hooked on Johanna Hurwitz and wishes to study her as a class may house all her books for a certain period of time.

Libraries might also consider putting all the genres related to a theme together so children wishing to explore a theme could look in one place and find nonfiction books, magazines, picture books and chapter books.

As children become involved in writing and begin to publish their own books, libraries could serve as publishing centers and places to house these books. Their books could be processed and cataloged. Also, as children see themselves as authors, they want to know about "real" authors. Libraries could provide opportunities for children to interact with published writers.

Just as whole language fosters a collaborative effort between children and teachers, it is a perfect vehicle to foster collaboration between teachers, libraries and librarians.

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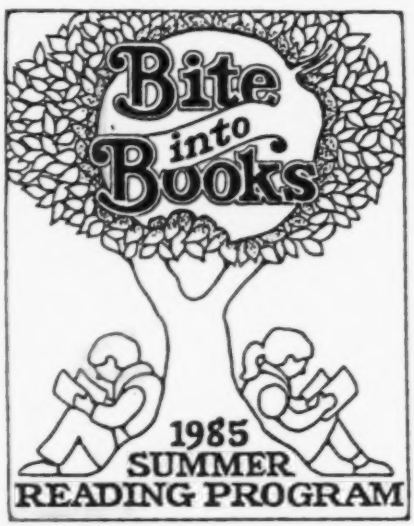
# SUMMER READING PROGRAMS — DEADLY OR DYNAMIC?

*By Carolyn Travers*

**Summer Reading Program** n. 1. A fun educational way to introduce children and books. 2. A time of planning and promoting reading along with activities in the library. 3. A contest for kids to compete in. 4. A recurring nightmare in which librarians come up with a theme and "great entertainment" for every child in the community. 5. A concept that is such an experiment in terror that the total idea cannot even be dealt with in your library.

Which one of these definitions is yours? Are you having the time of your life getting books and children together in your library during the summer? Maybe you feel your reading game is a numbers racket for children. Are you running yourself into your carpeted floor making papier-mâché, reading so-so stories and lettering certificates? Is your summer reading program deadly — or dynamic?

The summer reading game is something that I find myself having great enthusiasm for when we are choosing a theme and crafts to relate. I throw myself into a huge kickoff party complete with cake and decorations. But after about the 500th oral book report, I could literally check myself into the nuthouse. What is it about this vigorous undertaking that makes even the most devoted children's librarian wish for September and the children back in school?




The Nyack Library (where I am the Children's Librarian) is a middle-size public library with roughly 55,000 volumes. We are part of the Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS). This system has 51 member libraries and 45 of these libraries do some sort of summer reading program for kids. In October, a committee of children's librarians from Rockland and Orange counties meet, discuss and argue about the theme for the coming summer. In 1990, our motif had a medieval flavor with "Jest for Fun — Make Merry with Books." Those of past years have included "Clown around with Books," a circus theme; "Bite into Books," a culinary excursion; and the now popular "Library Safari — Go Wild with Books," which used the jungle as our theme.

This October, the committee decided that the theme for next summer will be "Bugs" and an official title is yet to be decided. Our committee is divided into three groups:

- Booklist Committee — chooses books that may or may not be related to the theme for booklists that are printed on bookmarks which are given out to children.
- Graphics Committee — chooses a local artist who illustrates the program materials and meets with him or her to check on progress.
- Programming Committee — picks and paws through every book on crafts and on book sharing to find activities related to the theme.

Our reading game packet includes membership cards, posters, flyers, reading logs, buttons, a game board and tokens, a wall display unit and reading certificates. Each library has its own methods of using these items. Most of the libraries use prizes but in different ways. Some libraries (including Nyack) give a special prize to the boy and girl who have read the most books. I use gift certificates from the local bookstore. Stickers are a very popular giveaway item, usually one sticker for every book read. Other prizes include rings, plastic animals, books, small toys, buttons, t-shirt transfers, pencils, reading certificates and fast food/ice cream coupons. The Sloatsburg Public Library, in connection with the medieval theme in 1990, printed "castle dollars." They priced small items and children could buy things with their "money." I've also read of "dinosaur dollars" being used this way.

Our program ideas are compiled in a manual that is provided to each library — a bible for the summer. In it one finds how to plan programs, make displays, share books with children, booklists, craft ideas, games, film suggestions and resources along with a listing of performers who give theme related performances in our area.

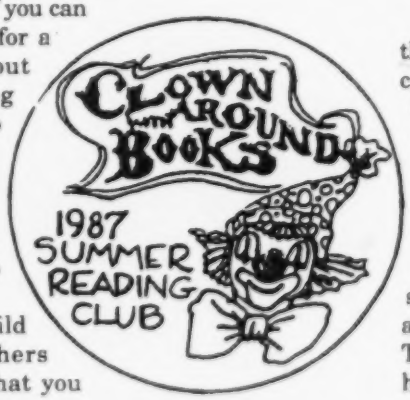
The most important step in planning a reading program is to start early. Once you have decided upon a

theme, it is wise to book your outside talents. Many of our libraries have a large final farewell reading party and have a special performer to do a show. At Nyack, children who read six books earn a ticket to see this show. I believe that six or seven weeks is enough time for a summer reading game. One year, I had it till almost Labor Day, and did we get burned out! Now is the time to devise your game plan. What kind of activities do you wish to do? Crafts, booktalks, storytimes? Can you do a craft program or do you need to hire out for someone to do it?

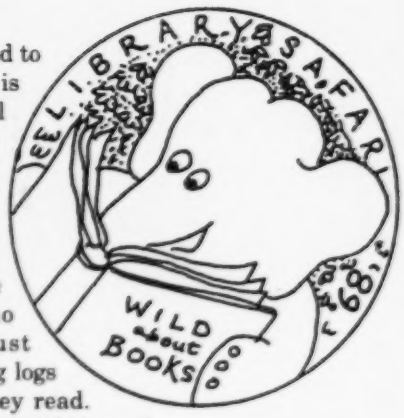
It is nice to have a mixture of theme- and nontheme-related programs. Last year, because of the medieval theme having to do with the Middle Ages, we had an edible castle party. Children got to build their own castle using graham crackers, frosting, candy and ice-cream cones. The West Nyack Library is fortunate to have Myrna Siegal, who is talented in the art of origami. She can tailor a program to fit any theme, and she will go to other libraries. Library scavenger hunts are popular. Children use clues to find books in the card catalog and locate them on the shelf. Face painting is fun and inexpensive.

Age is another consideration. Are you including non-readers in your program? I have a separate game for these children who read with their parents. The logistics are the same, but they have different kickoff and final parties. After making the who, what, where, when and how choices, you will need to make up a flyer or a brochure. Be sure to include sign-up times, age limits, number of children allowed in craft programs, and what, if anything, children might need to bring.

Now is when you put on your salesperson's hat. One of the best ways to sell your summer program is to go school visiting. Call your school librarians. Ask them if you can visit with each class for a story and to tell about the program. Bring enough brochures so that every child can take one home. Go to the school in costume or with a hat or something that ties into your theme.




Now that every child (and hopefully brothers and sisters) know what you are doing, you will need to decide how your game is going to be run. Will you have each child give some sort of a report for the books he or she has read? There are mixed feelings about this. Some libraries require no reports, children just record in their reading logs the titles of books they read. Other libraries have special times for giving written or oral book reports. Having a system that works for your community's children is important.




I liken the summer reading game program to the old song "Old MacDonald Had a Farm." Pretend that you are Old MacDonald, the library is your farm, and the feed is your books. Then think of the children as hungry animals. The following lists are things that you can do.

To rope the children in:

- Give out brochures.
- Dress up.
- Go school visiting.
- Get staff involved.
- Put up posters around your library and the town.
- Use radio and local cable spots to advertise.
- Call fast food/ice cream places for coupons.
- Organize a kickoff party.
- Use the local newspaper to advertise.

Once at the farm you can:

- read books
- book talk
- do a craft project
- face paint
- have a library scavenger hunt
- hire performers to do magic shows, plays, etc.
- sponsor a contest (bookmark or poster)
- listen to book reports or get written ones
- have a storytelling club.

And finally, to set your animals out to pasture after they are full of books and the knowledge they bring, you can:

- Give them back their reading logs.
- Hand out prizes.
- Make a photo display of events.
- Send names of winners to newspapers.
- Have a farewell party.

Some New York Library Association meetings have suggested that a summer reading program is just another drudge the profession just barely tolerates. This is such a shame. A summer reading project is not a huge financial burden, depending upon your choice of

what you are going to do, and it can be of significant worth to children and to the community. During the summer, there are some children who might otherwise never step into the library building. If we can use the summer reading program as a means to get children and their parents into the library, then why not try it?

Experience has shown me that the key to a successful reading program for the summer is enthusiasm. Preparation, planning and perspiration are all definite parts of the game. But if you are excited and make the children feel that way, you have done something very rewarding. Reading games should exist because children love them. See if you can make your library a one or two by the definition rather than a four or five. Get involved, get your community involved and make your summer the most dynamic ever instead of a deadly one. Your library needs a reading program, and it needs you to light the fuse to the dynamite. It will explode into wondrous fireworks. Go for it!

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**Carolyn Travers** *is the Children's Librarian at the Nyack Library in Nyack, NY.*

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**A BOOK IS A BOY**
*By Basit*

They both tell stories

They open up with help
from their friends.

They have beginnings and
endings

They have dreams and
schemes.

— reprinted with permission from *Just Born Poems, Volume Five, An Anthology of Poetry Written by the Children at St. Mary's Hospital, Bayside, NY*, Poets in Public Service, Inc., 1990.

# SUMMER READING PROGRAMS IN NEW YORK STATE, 1990

The following is brief information about highlights of several successful 1990 summer reading programs. The sponsoring libraries provided information on these programs to Anne Simon, Library Development Specialist at the New York State Library.

**LONGWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY:** "Dig into Books" kept young adults in Middle Island busy all summer reading and treasure hunting. A talented clerk in the Technical Services Department wrote "The Legend of Simeon the Simian," which contained the literary and film character clues to finding the "treasure" hidden in the library building. Adding to the ambience was a "quicksand pit" in the young adult section — complete with snakes, spiders, swinging vines and monkeys!

**BRENTWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY:** The Young Adult Reading Club included a scavenger hunt, weekly drawings for paperback books and culminated in a folk-rock musical.

**GENEVA FREE LIBRARY:** "Cover to Cover — Coast to Coast" was the theme for young adults, encouraging them to "read" their way across a gigantic map of the United States posted in the Young Adult Department. "Rest Stop" coupons to be redeemed at local fast food restaurants could be earned by crossing the Mississippi River and reaching the West Coast. (All participants started out in New York State, of course!) Each young adult set his or her own "route," reading one book per state. Prizes were awarded to those who completed a cross-country circuit to the West Coast back to New York State. Grand prizes went to those who reached all the "lower 48" states.

**MID-YORK LIBRARY SYSTEM:** A New York State Council on the Arts performance grant made a variety of programmers available to member libraries. Some highlights include: monster costume contest (**Barneveld**); writing contest (**Booneville**); Rex, the friendly Dinosaur's visit to special needs children — with the help of teen and preteen volunteers (**Camden**); a monster museum (**Canastota**); read-a-louds and evening teddy bear storytimes (**Cazenovia**); haunted house (**Deansboro**); Colonial games (**DeRuyter**); programs from the Utica Children's Museum (**Hamilton, Utica**); Renaissance musicians, a juggler and maskmaker (**Herkimer**); visits from the Herkimer County Dairy Princess and her family of cows (**Jordanville, West Winfield**); invitations to senior citizens to a children's magic show (**Old Forge**); stories told by local historians (**Sullivan Town**); visit from the Utica Zoomobile (**West Winfield, Westernville**); and a program by an Oneida County deputy sheriff with Sam the Dog (**Westernville**).

**CHAPPAQUA LIBRARY:** The library, Friends of the Library and School District P.T.A. cosponsored "Summer Savers" — a program to train teenagers to "save a life" by learning to read aloud to younger children. Teens were issued library lifeguard t-shirts to wear during the 285 hours they were "on duty" in the children's room over the summer.

**EAST MEADOW LIBRARY:** Teens in the "Book Buddy" program read stories to younger children, daily all summer. They also produced plays that they adapted from books they were reading and put on productions for the younger children in the community.

**GARDEN CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY:** "Teen and Tot Storytime" involved 50 teenagers who presented storytimes for younger children at the local swimming pool each day.

**THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY:** In the "Dive into Books" program, teens reviewed books for their peers; the reviews were posted in the branch libraries (as "thumbs up" or "thumbs down"). Baseball card and comic book swaps were also held.

**SEA CLIFF VILLAGE LIBRARY:** "Sandy Tales for Seafaring Folk" summer reading program attracted all ages from infants to the elderly for programs held on the beach.

**PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY:** "Summer Safari" activities included staff-developed games such as "Readо" (based on bingo), "Literary Jeopardy," and "Literary Pictionary."

**ELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY:** Tiny Tots Storytime Workshop involved planting carrots and radishes and hearing stories such as *The Carrot Seed*, *The Little Red Hen* and *The Great Big Enormous Turnip*. At the end of the story, the carrots and radishes were pulled from the ground at a celebration that featured — what else? — carrot cake.

**CANNON FREE LIBRARY:** Summer reading participants created 1,000 paper cranes to decorate the children's room ceiling.

**ROXBURY LIBRARY:** A crawl-through green dragon, created from a refrigerator carton and papier-mâché, invited children to "Devour a Book."

**WILLIAM B. OGDEN FREE LIBRARY, WALTON:** Participants posted their favorite recipes as part of "Cook Up a Summer of Fun" activities.

# TO LIVE THE LANGUAGE — A WRITER'S VIEW OF CREATIVE LITERACY

*By Michael Rutherford*

I'm a writer, committed, addicted, afflicted and joyous about it. At 44 years-old, I've been writing for over 25 years, worked in libraries in my early twenties for over a decade, and have been teaching (sometimes for library systems) for almost 20 years. In my own life there has been an unconscious but fruitful merging of these roles. What I'll be speaking about is a very personal view of libraries, of how they've helped me, succored me and to a great extent, let me become the artist that I wanted to be as a teenager. Perhaps, as Jose Luis Borge and Umberto Eco suggest, life itself is a vast, labyrinthian library of memories, desires and countless stories waiting to be experienced.

In a broader and more important sense, I am also going to discuss the absolutely necessary collaborations that must take place within schools and communities among artists, librarians, students, teachers and parents if we are to maintain and expand both literacy and writing skills.

To begin with, I literally can't remember a time when I couldn't read. This, of course, has a great deal to do with both the energy and innate wisdom of my parents. Within eight years of my father's return from World War II, my parents conceived six children. Despite the logistics, my mother and father spent a good deal of time reading to all of us in the burgeoning family, as well as singing us to sleep. We were lucky that the times were too early and our funds too limited for us to end up as one of the many modern families whose family room is really a television parlor.

Some of my first memories are of reading the back of the newspaper my father raised as a feeble wall against the yammering of his numerous vocal progeny at the breakfast table. As the eldest male child, I was the unwilling recipient of many of my parents' hopes. My own precocious reading skills were seen as the assurance of a successful legal career.

But, to my father's disappointment, I persevered in my own infatuation with language, books and libraries. When I was eight years-old (much to the dismay of the local librarians), I started up a lending library that had a widespread popularity among my peers in the neighborhood. It was successful because of the preternatural knowledge I had of what kids wanted to read.

But later, in puberty, I abandoned my own collection and succumbed to the lure of our local library in Menands, NY. It was located above the VFW Post and the songs, conversations and quarrels that drifted up from the bar into the library during evening hours flavored the dry atmosphere that the volunteer librarians strove to enforce. There were four rooms in the library and only two librarians, one of whom was chained to the front desk.

In our adolescence, we discovered that it was an ideal place to go and neck. Our parents were pleased at our inexplicable desire to frequent a cultural institution and we were careful to carry our school books with us as talismans against their doubt. The head librarian, an earnest (and, I realize now, understanding) spinster named Ada Lee, would leave us to our romances in the periodicals room until we became too quiet and then, with a cough outside the door, come in to collate the magazines. When I was older, and Miss Lee was old, I visited her home with my father, tasted some of the lethal dandelion wine she made for herself and discovered a framed copy of Poe's "Annabel Lee" hung on the wall of her living room.

My passionate involvement with libraries continued on through college, where I worked my way through school as a page in the library at the Junior College at Albany and then received an MLS from SUNY at Albany while I worked for the Upper Hudson Library Federation and the Albany Public Library teaching filmmaking to inner-city kids and serving as a reference librarian.

But soon I succumbed to the blandishments (if not the financial security) of poetry and fiction writing and began to teach full-time in the New York State Poets in the Schools program. As it was when I was a child, my life continues to be tempered by my love of language, books and the subtle, generous democracy of libraries and librarians.

At the present time, I'm the director of Alternative Literary Programs (ALPS), which places poets, fiction writers, dramatists, storytellers and other language artists in schools throughout New York State (except New York City, which has its own similar fine programs). Each member of ALPS has both extensive publication as well as teaching experience. For the last eleven years, ALPS artists have been presenting residency programs of a week or longer in duration, teaching writing from a writer's perspective. In many cases, we're working within communities, both rural and inner city, that are culturally deprived.

The main focus of a residency is writing. Writers work with the same four classes a minimum of five days. Under the direction (and hopefully, inspiration) of the ALPS artist, students and their classroom teachers write each day that the artist visits. At the end of the residency, the school holds a student reading during the evening open to the community. These readings often take place in either school or community libraries. If the school has the funds and clerical staff, it publishes a mag-

azine of work in which each child who has participated in the program is published.

We present writing as an activity accessible to students of all levels of language ability, an art form based on the validity of each writer's emotions and the desire to share the expression of those feelings with others. In having schools publish the work of every student we work with, we reiterate that all voices have value.

By emphasizing both poetry and fiction as spoken language, we restore the humane oral tradition of bards and storytellers that television has enervated. By their own presences, ALPS artists show both students and teacher that books and the art of writing spring from palpable, fallible and committed people much like themselves, who care enough about their craft to share it with others, engage them in its creation and to give value to their expression. We create artists as well as audiences and stress, for whomever we work with, that reading is the exercise of spirit that allows the graceful and explosive power of the gymnastics of writing.

How does the ALPS program dovetail with library services? On the surface, tangentially, though both school and community librarians in general have been some of our strongest supporters. In a practical sense, public libraries, particularly in rural communities, often are the major (or even the sole) sources of cultural activity. Many public libraries in small towns have had extensive ongoing readings and writing workshops that are amazingly well-attended.

On the school level, many ALPS programs have been initiated and coordinated by librarians. As a matter of course, whenever we go into a school, we emphasize to students the value of reading. We also work with the school librarian to organize a display collection of books that complements the literary discipline of the ALPS residency. The librarians at almost all our program sites have also told us that the classes we've worked with take significantly more books out of the school library after a residency.

All these are notable and noble details. But the affinities between ALPS programs and library services reaches much deeper than these instances of positive action. Both artists and librarians are working for a common goal: sustaining and expanding the overall literacy of our audiences and our patrons.

Simply put, America is a nation at risk because too many of our citizens and our students don't see the value of reading, let alone writing. Reading itself is a humanizing experience, an activity that builds empathy as much as intellect. By exposing a reader to the various emotions and opinions of a wide range of characters in both fiction and history, books force us to broaden our own awareness of others.

It is a truism that the enemies of libraries and literacy, the fundamentalist right, are people who read too few books and who seek in the few books that they read too many answers. They are people who not only seek to limit what their children read, but to dictate what books are "allowed" on school library shelves for the general school populace. In a very active sense, they seek to limit the exercise of first amendment free speech by exercising their own freedom of religious expression. While I realize the fairness of having school districts address their views, the timidness of most school systems in the face of this no-nothing fringe repulses me as an artist, a parent and a reader.

But most broadly, both librarians and language artists function within the total ecology of language. We all are part of the absolutely essential commitment to expression, language and communication. Librarians cannot exist without books (created by authors) or eager, energetic patrons; writers cannot exist without publication, appreciative readers or literate librarians.

Indeed, one of the mysterious consequences of American education has been the isolation of various subject areas and linguistic skills, an inability to see them as part of a broad panoply of general, vital communication skills. Reading has been taught as a discipline separate from writing; writing has been presented as an exercise of grammar skills that owes little to either thought, creativity or the value of the feelings of its student author.

It is also undeniable that the real battle for the ongoing vitality of poetry and fiction in America is being fought not at the college level, but by artists, teachers and librarians working with children in our public schools. College writing programs have, to a great extent, created a mandarin culture in literature that shows no ability or inclination to communicate with a broad general audience.

In a general sense, the recent development of both process writing and whole language approaches (like the Comprehensive Instructional Management Systems, or CIMS, a reading assessment program) herald the recognition of the writing-literacy continuum. More specifically, the widespread grassroots efforts of artists and professional educators to teach writing in a way that offers students a vital, personal context for both language skills and literacy afford the most realistic chance we have for the development of a national culture that reads, recognizes writers and values the integrity of libraries.

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**Michael Rutherford** *is the founder and director of Alternative Literary Programs (ALPS), which places language artists in school residencies in New York State. ALPS receives major funding from the New York State Council on the Arts' Arts in Education Program. Mr. Rutherford is a widely published poet and fiction writer, whose most recent book is* The Infinite Kingdoms, *a collection of fantasy novellas published by Owlswick Press, Philadelphia, PA.*

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# THE IMAGINATION CELEBRATION AND "THE MAGIC OF BOOKS"

*By Vivienne Anderson*

More than a million students, teachers, parents and members of the general public are participating this year in New York State's Imagination Celebration. The Celebration involves children, families and educators in an unparalleled variety of experiences in music, dance, theater, visual arts, poetry, storytelling, inventing, creative and journalistic writing, videography, holography, puppetry and magic. Now seven years-old, the New York State program is growing each year. In 1990, there were Celebrations at 10 sites.

New York is one of 12 states that help the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, carry out its Congressional mandate to provide "programs for children and youth...designed specifically for their participation, education and recreation." The New York State Alliance for Arts Education is the affiliate for the program. The New York State Museum and the Empire State Plaza are the home of the Imagination Celebration. Together, the New York State Legislature, the Kennedy Center and the New York State Alliance for Arts Education have developed since 1983 a major statewide, year-long arts education program that links with exciting State and national events, including a wonderful program for children with disabilities. Governor and Mrs. Mario M. Cuomo are the Honorary Chairs of the Celebration and the hosts of "The Governor's Children's Very Special Arts Festival," a full day of the Celebration at the Executive Mansion in Albany.

The Imagination Celebration's honorary committee includes leaders from the Senate and the Assembly. These distinguished legislators and their colleagues, with the Governor's approval, have made it possible for the State Celebration in Albany to create and coordinate programs across the State.

## MINI-IMAGINATION CELEBRATIONS

In recent years the Celebration has moved out from Albany to the replication sites, each of which mounts a Mini-Imagination Celebration. There are now regional Mini-Imagination Celebrations in Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, the Bronx, Manhattan, Niagara Falls, Plattsburgh, Suffolk County, Syracuse and Westchester County. Don't be misled by the name, however. Each site operates a major celebration of the arts and the imagination, involving many schools, libraries, arts organizations and others. Each is year-long and requires extensive local planning, cooperation with many organizations and follow through.

Four major movements have requested the Mini-Imagination Celebration regional sites to serve as a statewide network for their program efforts:

- ***The New York State Commission on the Bicentennial of the United State Constitution***. During its three-year existence, the Bicentennial Commission utilized the Statewide Mini-Imagination Celebrations as a network to

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## NEW YORK STATE ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION HONORARY COMMITTEE OF STATE LEGISLATORS

**The Senate**

Hon. Ralph J. Marino, President Pro Tem
Hon. Tarky J. Lombardi, Jr., Chairman, Finance Committee
Hon. Roy M. Goodman, Chairman, Special Committee on the Arts and Cultural Affairs
Hon. John J. Marchi, Vice President Pro Tem
Hon. James J. Lack, Chairman, Labor Committee
Hon. Kenneth P. LaValle, Chairman, Higher Education Committee
Hon. Thomas W. Libous, Chairman, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Committee
Hon. Leonard P. Stavisky, Ranking Minority Member, Conversation and Recreation Committee

**The Assembly**

Hon. Mel Miller, Speaker of the Assembly
Hon. Arthur O. Eve, Deputy Speaker
Hon. James R. Tallon, Jr., Majority Leader
Hon. Clarence D. Rappleyea, Minority Leader
Hon. Saul Weprin, Chairman, Ways and Means Committee
Hon. Angelo Del Toro, Chairman, Education Committee
Hon. Joseph Pillittere, Chairman, Committee on Tourism, Arts and Sports
Hon. John Cochrane, Ranking Minority Member, Ways and Means Committee

increase student awareness of Constitution-related themes through the arts. The resulting booklet, "Through the Eyes of Children: LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL," documents the arts activities of thousands of students who interpreted "liberty and justice for all," through the arts. The publication presents the students' creative efforts to understand the impact of freedom and fairness on their own lives as young citizens, as guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The Bicentennial Commission will use this publication as a lasting children's testimonial to our Constitutional system of government.

- ***The New York State Commission on the Columbus Quincentenary***. The Chair of the Commission, Mrs. Matilda Raffa Cuomo, has met with the Leadership Teams from the 10 Imagination Celebration sites to brainstorm ways in which the Mini-Imagination Celebrations will serve as a network for the impending Columbus Quincentenary. Schools and public libraries throughout the State will be part of this network.

- ***The National Maritime Historical Society*** and ***Operation Sail*** will bring the Tall Ships back from around the world in 1992. They have asked to work through the Mini-Imagination Celebration Network in a unique "Scholarships at Sea" program. Ten students from each site, each accompanied by a parent or teacher will experience a full weekend of activity on the Tall Ships. A jury of professional authors at each site will select the students who write the most interesting papers about the Tall Ships for this fascinating experience.

- ***The National "Night of 1,000 Stars"*** also utilized the Mini-Imagination Celebrations, throughout the State, to demonstrate the importance of books and literacy as a preview to Governor Cuomo's fall 1990 Conference on Library and Information Services. Working with the Coordinator of the Governor's Conference, the Governor's Commission on Libraries, the New York State Library and the New York Library Association, the Celebration cosponsored New York State's "Night of 7,000 Stars." (We have 7,000 libraries.) On April 25, each Mini-Imagination Celebration publicly celebrated "The Magic of Books," through the arts at all Imagination Celebration sites throughout the State. Descriptions of "The Magic of Books" program appear later in this article.

The Imagination Celebration has accepted these requests with great pride and assurance, because the learning opportunities they present are exciting for children, and they lend themselves readily to Celebration themes. The invitations indicate that the statewide network of Mini-Imagination Celebrations is receiving growing recognition for its outstanding site leadership, exemplary interpretation of major learning experiences

and sound educational accomplishment. These collaborative efforts in the arts stimulate momentum for the Mini-Imagination Celebration network and indicate the growing value statewide leaders place upon the Mini-Imagination Celebrations.

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Imagination Celebration has been able to secure funding for student scholarships to support the future education of students whose works are selected by panels of jurors for this honor. The scholarships are presented in the form of United States Savings Bonds for the following statewide programs: Creative Writing Opportunity, Imaginative Images, Invention Convention and the Capital Region Young Playwrights Project.

The Kennedy Center Honor Roll, depicted here, has been created to symbolize special appreciation to the Student Scholarship Supporters. The Alliance expresses deep appreciation to those listed on the Honor Roll for their valuable motivational contribution to the education of young people.

## "THE MAGIC OF BOOKS" IN THE CAPITAL REGION

The lively, engrossing theme of the 1989-90 Imagination Celebration was "*The Magic of Books*." Teachers, students and artists built their arts activities on this theme during the year-long in-school Mini-Imagination Celebrations in the 10 regional Imagination Celebration sites that blanket the State. They created lively, educational Celebrations using books as literary and visual works of art, interpreting a vast variety of characters and stories through the arts. Students deepened their interest in books, improved their reading and writing skills and greatly increased their use of libraries. In the Capital Region (the several counties in the Albany area), each school presenting a Mini-Imagination Celebration received four free artist days to help students and teachers plan and present their Mini-Imagination Celebrations.

Like other Mini-Imagination Celebration sites, the Capital Region cosponsored "The Night of 7,000 Stars." There were simultaneous Mini-Celebration presentations in all 10 Celebration sites at 11:00 a.m. on April 25, 1990. Mrs. Cuomo, Honorary cochair, with Governor Cuomo, of the Statewide Imagination Celebration, accepted the Imagination Celebration's invitation to serve as Honorary Chair of "The Night of 7,000 Stars" and participated, with delight, in the Albany Celebration.

Many schools and libraries worked together as the Mini-Celebration evolved during the year. An original Mini-Celebration on "The Magic of Books" by students from the Hudson City Schools, will be presented at the November 1990 Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services in Albany. Four other examples of students' interpretations of "The Magic of Books" through the arts are:

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## Books, Caterpillars and Flowerland School #19, Albany

A visual artist helped first- and second-graders create their own Mini-Celebration, which combined reading books, storytelling related to the books they read, visual arts and dance. During the sessions with the visiting artist, each grade created a story inspired by the books read. Second graders chose the story of "Ug-ee the Caterpillar." The first graders wrote about "Flowerland," using visual art techniques to depict the story and make their original books come alive in three dimensions. "Ug-ee" and "Flowerland" became two huge accordion books, each page written and designed by individual students and fitted into a complete book format. Eventually "Ug-ee, the Caterpillar" and "Flowerland" become one grand adventure to be performed by the students.

Ug-ee has no friends and sets out to find some. He meets a butterfly and the two have many adventures together. Finally they end up in Flowerland where they enjoy a happy life.

The artist helped the children design and make their own costumes for the production. Some were caterpillars, some butterflies and some flowers. Students chose music and practiced a simple dance in which they portrayed Ug-ee and the Butterfly's travels to Flowerland.

On the day of the performance, the school auditorium was filled with students, teachers, family and friends. Each story was narrated by students, after which the dance was performed. Families, teachers and students were then invited to read and admire the long student-made accordion books that adorned the front of the stage. Also on view were story quilts, made by the stu-

dents, depicting scenes from "Ug-ee" and "Flowerland."

Teachers Elissa Sidoti and Ann Mary Smith were elated by these achievements. Ann Mary Smith said, "Students believe now that books really *are* magic. They loved every activity and have since applied their newly-learned skills to other curriculum activities."

## Geography, Cookbooks, Novels and Fairy Tales Duanesburg Elementary School

The Duanesburg "Magic of Books" Mini-Celebration set out to make students throughout the school more aware of bookmaking: writing, illustrating and bookbinding. Students worked with the help of Bruce Hiscock, a writer and illustrator of children's books whose favorite themes are nature and the natural world. They researched and wrote about endangered species, insects and nature.

Mr. Hiscock helped the students write stories and then guided them in editing, layout, book design and illustration. He taught the "process" of book making, which he considered the most important aspect of the workshops. The young people experienced the pride of becoming "published authors."

The children used "The Magic of Books" theme to become more informed about countries around the world as their Mini-Imagination Celebration was incorporated into their larger, school-wide theme "Around the World in 80 Days." Students learned about the geography, culture and customs of people on other continents. Sixth graders compiled recipes from around the world and made cookbooks to sell. They also illustrated their favorite novel or fairy tale.

The Duanesburg Mini-Celebration took place throughout the school year, beginning with the "Parents as Reading Partners" program and a book fair. The culmination of the year-long Celebration was a "Books Alive Illustration Opportunity" in which students were asked to illustrate their favorite book characters. Six students were selected to enlarge their characters on 4' x 8' wood panels. The panels are now proudly exhibited in the library. Teacher Barbara Mauriello described the book project as an invaluable activity, saying: "Working with Bruce on this project was a very positive experience for the children. He encouraged and worked individually with each child. He helped them complete a written and illustrated book of which they were very proud."

## Songs, Puppets and Books Mariaville

Mariaville Elementary School worked with two Imagination Celebration artists: singer/songwriter Paul Strausman and puppeteer Grian MacGregor. They also invited author Stephen Krensky to talk with students about how to publish a book. These talented artists cooperated in a unique project geared to introduce the whole Mariaville student body to "The Magic of Books."

Mr. Strausman focused on song-writing with K-2 students, using Mr. Krensky's books as inspiration. Each class wrote a song about one of Mr. Krensky's books. Mr. Strausman and the students read the story and decided whether it was happy, sad, funny, mysterious, or exciting. He played music in minor keys, major keys, fast or slow, and the children selected the right sounds for their stories. Mr. Strausman then taught the children how to phrase the words of the story to fit the music. The students and Mr. Strausman performed the three songs created in this project at a school assembly.

Ms. MacGregor worked with students in grades 3-5, creating puppets from wooden spoons. She wrote, in her workshop proposal, "The most magical thing about books is that they are written by real people. We'll make students the authors of their own stories, and I'll assist them in creating a puppet production around those stories." The student-author-puppeteers were responsible for every aspect of their productions: costumes, puppets, scripts and scenery. Each class was divided into four groups. Each group wrote a story and turned it into a puppet script. They cast it from among members of the group and created additional production elements under Ms. MacGregor's guidance. By the time the project was finished, they had four original puppet plays, which were performed in an assembly for the whole school, families and friends. Mariaville's annual book fair concluded the year-long Mini-Celebration.

**Vivienne Anderson** *is President of the New York Alliance for Arts Education and Statewide Coordinator of the Imagination Celebration. She is a former Associate Commissioner of Education in the State Education Department. Her leadership and tireless work in arts education is known throughout the United States. She is Vice Chair of the new City of Albany Arts Commission and serves as an officer or advisor to many arts groups.* ***Mary Murphy****, Program Coordinator of the Mini-Imagination Celebration, assisted in preparing this article.*

**"THE WORLD IS AN OPEN BOOK"**
**1991 NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK THEME**

The Children's Book Council has chosen "The World Is an Open Book" as the theme for the 72nd observance of national Children's Book Week, November 11-17, 1991. Caldecott Honor Book winner Paul Zelinsky created the full-color poster. In it two young children enjoy a book with characters from Captain Hook to Humpty Dumpty to Huck Finn flowing in and out of a book on a blue-green river. Don Wood's frieze pictures a musing menagerie fascinated by its books. There are two streamers. Maira Kalman's characters react to reading: one laughs, one cries, some sing, and another smiles serenely. David Shannon depicts a child's mind bursting with images as he reads. Valerie Worth is the 1991 Book Week poet. Her poem appears on a bookmark illustrated by Ms. Kalman. All of these items are included in the Book Week Kit for $20.00 They can also be purchased separately.

"Author Talks," the audiocassette for adolescents, is back by popular demand. On it, 10 important and celebrated authors discuss their work. The authors included are Robert Cormier, Paula Danziger, Patricia MacLachlan, Ann M. Martin, Norma Fox Mazer, Milton Meltzer, Walter Dean Myers, Richard Peck, Jerry Spinelli, and Mildred D. Taylor. Each audiocassette is available for $7.50

A full-color brochure that pictures these and other reading encouragement items offered for sale by CBC is available by sending a stamped (1 oz.) self-addressed, business-size envelope to Book Week Brochure, Children's Book Council, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

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# IT'S YOUR LIBRARY: INTO THE FUTURE!

*By Kathleen Connors*

The Friends of Thrall Library spent spring 1990 on their first big project, the "It's Your Library: Into the Future!" essay contest. This was the Friends' first year as an organization, and this contest helped them meet several of their goals: It raised community awareness of Thrall Library and it's space problems; it involved community leaders in a library project; it contributed to the cultural life of the community; and gave the Friends a chance to show the library and the community what the organization could accomplish.

## THE PLANNING

Susan Beth Pfeffer, a children's author who lives in Middletown, NY, was invited to Tulsa, OK, to give out awards for its library-based municipal writing contest. Ms. Pfeffer is one of the Directors of the Friends, and, at a Friends meeting, she suggested this as an idea for a possible project for the organization. The idea was immediately accepted, and she was quickly appointed chair of the committee.

Although she hadn't anticipated this honor, she immediately formed a committee and started planning the essay contest. The theme of the contest was developed to provide an opportunity for real creativity (by placing it in the future), to highlight the space problems at Thrall, and to get ideas of what the community would like to see in a new library. A decision was made to limit the format to essays of 500 words or less, but with age categories that would include first grade through adult.

To reach potential essayists, the Friends printed flyers, which were distributed through the library, the local school system, and to all the school libraries in the county through BOCES. Also, the Friends offered nominal cash awards. One hundred twenty essays were received.

## THE JUDGING

The preliminary judging was done by the essay contest committee. The criteria used was content, originality, and quality of expression.

The official judges were selected to represent a broad segment of the community. Mike Levine, newspaper columnist, Ed Lloyd, business owner, Mary McPhillips, the County Executive, Dr. Paul Johnson, member of the Board of Education, and Ruth Kassel, County Legislator and local attorney, all agreed to participate. The decision of the judges was final, but a last-minute change by the Friends did extend the categories to include extra honorable mentions.

## THE AWARDS NIGHT

The awards were presented on April 26 in a ceremony that featured remarks by Ellen Conford, popular children's author. A pamphlet was prepared with a copy of each of the award-winning essays. The award-winning essayists also had a chance to read their own work to the audience. Even the youngest authors were pleased to have this opportunity.

Ms. Conford spoke about the role libraries had played in her own life, fostering a love of reading and eventually, of writing. Now the author of more than 30 books for children and young adults, she said that her library had what she needed to learn how to write.

The Friends developed a wish list of items requested in all of the essays, which included some original ideas such as a drive-through window, robots to get your books, electronic chairs that lift you to the book you want when it's high up on the shelf, food vending machines, and seven copies of each book. The list also included many requests for things that we know Thrall Library, with its space problems, urgently needs, such as more tables and chairs, places to do quiet study, places to do group projects, areas to exhibit art by local artists, and parking for bikes and cars.

As an organization, the Friends greatly benefited by taking on such an ambitious project. Essay committee member Lori Joyce is now the chair of the Friends' Publicity Committee. Essay Committee member Mary Wenzel has become a Director of the organization. The story of the awards night appeared in two newspapers, giving great publicity to the Friends and the Thrall Library.

Jeff Berkman, current President of the Friends, believes that the essay contest was one of the key experiences in developing the group's confidence. "If there were no essay contest, there would be no celebrity auction," Beckman noted, speaking of the Friends current project to raise money for the Library. Incidentally, Susan Beth Pfeffer also had the idea for the celebrity auction and was quickly made chair of that committee. Some people never learn!

**Kathleen Connors** *is Government Documents Librarian at the Thrall Library in Middletown, NY. She is also responsible for the Library's outreach activities, which include liaison with the Friends of the Thrall Library. A delegate to the 1990 Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services, Ms. Connors is President-Elect of the New York Library Association Government Documents Round Table.*

**KIDS WELCOME HERE!**

The Youth Services Section of the New York Library Association has just published *Kids Welcome Here! Writing Public Library Policies that Promote Use by Young People*, a manual designed to assist library trustees, administrators and youth services librarians in developing public library policies that encourage library use by young people and their families.

Editor Anne E. Simon, consultant in youth services at the New York State Library's Division of Library Development, worked with a committee of children's, young adult and school librarians, researching key public library policy areas that affect young people, including: access to library services; collection development; reference services; programming policies; library conduct; building use; library philosophy, goals and objectives; staff communication and public relations; and role of trustees. Generic sample policy statements have been developed based on the committee's research and firsthand experience. Sample policies reviewed came from a variety of New York State's libraries, representing rural, suburban and city library communities.

While *Kids Welcome Here!* focuses on the effect of library policies on young people, many of the topics and samples are not age-specific and can be used in developing general policy guidelines. In the Preface, Roberta G. Cade, Director of the Division of Library Development, states: "*Kids Welcome Here!* is a wonderful beginning effort to bring together information on writing library policies that affect young people. This should be a useful tool for many librarians and trustees, helping them find ways to better serve both parents and children in public libraries."

*Kids Welcome Here!* comes in an 8 1/2" x 11", three-hole punched format, suitable for placement in a three-ring binder, to make photocopying samples and adding local information convenient. Copies are available at $13.00 each, prepaid, shipping included from: New York Library Association, 252 Hudson Avenue, Albany, NY 12210-1802; telephone: (518) 432-NYLA or (800) 252-NYLA; FAX: (518) 427-1690.



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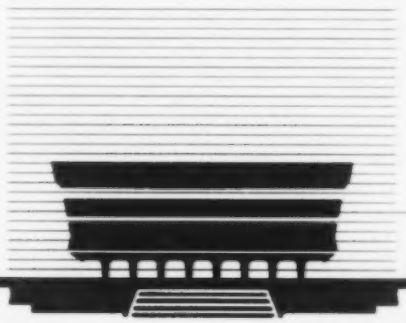


# The New York State LIBRARY

1990

## WHITE HOUSE AND GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCES EXAMINE LIBRARY SERVICE NEEDS, POLICIES

New Yorkers this year are taking a close look at their libraries in preparation for a 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Governor Mario M. Cuomo in January appointed Richard C. Wade chair of a 34-member Governor's Commission on Libraries to oversee arrangements for a November 1990 New York State Governor's Conference in anticipation of the 1991 national conference. The Commission will also make recommendations on library policy to the Governor and the Legislature early in 1991.

The July 1991 White House Conference follows a similar 1979 conference in which New Yorkers helped write an agenda for Federal legislation, including the 1984 Federal Library Services and Construction Act. Senators D'Amato and Moynihan and 31 members of the New York Congressional delegation sponsored legislation calling for the 1991 conference. The conference is a unique and important opportunity to influence Federal policy into the 21st century and beyond.

According to State Librarian Joseph F. Shubert, New York will have one of the largest and most democratic state conferences. Three-fourths of the 360 delegates will be elected, and the conference resolutions process is open to all residents of the State. Eleven regional conferences and six hearings conducted by the Commission focus on library and information services for literacy, productivity and democracy and the roles of libraries in an "information society."

The State Education Department and hundreds of volunteers are cooperating with the Governor's office and the Commission to make the Conference a success. According to Marian Crounse, conference director, the conference is supported by $210,000 in State funds, $43,000 from a White House Conference grant, gifts and the support of the State Education Department. Librarians, archivists and other information professionals are helping the Conference. The Education Department is providing office space for the Commission chair and volunteers in New York City and space in the State Library for conference staff.

Delegates to both the State and White House Conferences will be drawn in equal numbers from four groups: the general public, elected and appointed officials, library supporters, and library and information professionals. The year-long activities in New York State culminate in a November 28-30 conference and election of delegates to the White House Conference.

*The New York State Library is part of the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education. It serves the government and people of the State through two major divisions:*

- *The Research Library, one of the 100 largest research libraries in the nation, serving State government and the public in much the same way that the Library of Congress serves the nation.*
- *The Library Development Division, which works with the 7,000 libraries in New State, primarily through systems, to ensure that every resident of the State has timely and free access to a full range of library and information services — the most comprehensive library development program in the nation.*

# NIGHT OF 7,000 STARS

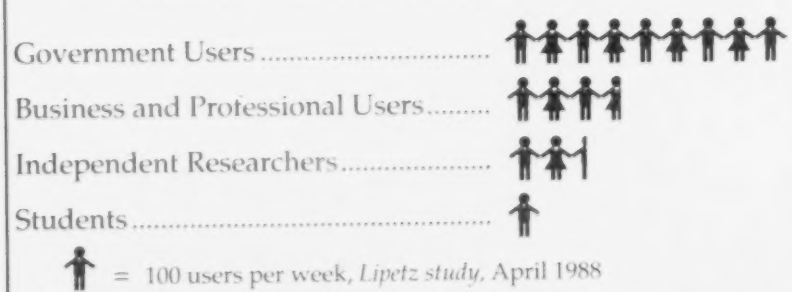
Authors, meteorologists, musicians, parents and sports figures were among the thousands of people who participated in *Night of 7,000 Stars* reading events in libraries on April 25, 1990. The statewide National Library Week event was carried out with the help of hundreds of volunteers and the corporate support of Gaylord Information Systems of Syracuse, which designed and provided posters for 7,000 libraries.

First Lady Matilda Cuomo, honorary chair of the celebration, asked library directors to focus on the "enormous importance of reading and literacy in the life of every resident of New York State." Among the events:

- Mystery writer Shelly Reuben (author of *Julian Solo*) read selections from three books with **Brooklyn** themes: *The Last Angry Man, The Boys of Summer* and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* at the Kings Highway Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library. Kris Parker, Rap artist KRS-One (Knowledge Reigns Supreme Over Nearly Everyone), delighted more than 300 people at the Central Library in Brooklyn.
- The Colgate University Red Raiders hockey team read to youngsters at the **Hamilton** Public Library.
- Libraries in **Erie County** sponsored perhaps the largest number of events: Pajamas were the proper attire for children at the **Hamburg** and **Lackawanna** public libraries as Girl Scouts read to their comfortable audience. The **Buffalo** Suzuki Strings accompanied the readings of duo Irv Weinstein and Blossom Cohan at the Central Library Auditorium. Children and adults in **Eden** deciphered clues in a literary scavenger hunt, accompanied by staff members dressed as Mark Twain, Amelia Bedelia, Encyclopedia Brown and Clifford the Big Red Dog. An actor portraying James Whitcomb Riley entertained with a reading of his poetry at the **Concord** Public Library, and people in **Amherst** met a cartoonist and the author of *Dracula is a Pain in the Neck*.
- Many youngsters who heard **Port Jervis** residents read poetry, humor, children's literature and the classics at their public library saw and heard, for the first time, a person read Stevenson's poetry from braille. New York City's First Lady Joycea Dinkins read to children at The **New York** Public Library.
- Pediatricians read stories at **Bethlehem** Public Library's preschoolers event while a cookbook author, a world-famous chef and more everyday "stars," including a couple who built an outdoor patio deck with the help of how-to-do-it library videos, entertained at the **Corning** Area Public Library. Author Harriet Sobol and meteorologist Bob Kovachick talked at the **State Library**.

The New York Library Association, the Imagination Celebration. the Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services and the State Education Department cooperated with academic, public, school and other libraries in the *Night of 7,000 Stars*.

## WHO COMES TO THE STATE LIBRARY?



# MAXIMIZING RESOURCES: INFORMATION FOR DECISIONS

The people who use the State Library, either on site or by interlibrary loan, get information that helps them make decisions, enlarge their understanding or complete reports and analyses. More than half of the people who do research at the Library are State government staff, and almost a quarter of them are business and professional users. Other on site users are university students and independent scholars.

Many government information seekers use the Library without ever coming into the Library itself — through microcomputer access, service points in other State buildings, and by phone or messenger. The Library's online catalog is available in each Senate and Assembly office, in special libraries operated by State agencies, and to many others with microcomputers.

According to Director Jerome Yavarkovsky, Library staff answered 90,883 reference questions this year. Many questions lead to the loan of a book or to copying pages from statistical or other reports. Yavarkovsky points out that electronic information sources make it possible for many users to find on their own information that formerly had to be located by library staff (see *Electronic Information Sources*).

Both staff and experienced users of the State Library use the electronic reference station to consult the catalogs of other major libraries. This year the Library obtained 2,291 interlibrary loans from libraries throughout the United States and other countries.

Many people use information packaged and distributed by Library staff who anticipate information needs or attend the Library's seminars for research users. This year Legislative and Governmental Services staff, headed by Mary Redmond, Principal Librarian, organized seminars for State agency staffs on "Agriculture and the Environment," grantsmanship, and using automation to locate Federal documents and Federal information sources. Staff also sponsored, with the Capital District Library Council's Documents Interest Group, a Freedom of Information program marking the first year of a new State documents information program. Some 300 public, university, school and special libraries throughout New York State participate in the program. Some are "access centers," which provide the public detailed information about State documents; others have collections of the most used publications. Twenty research library participants receive complete sets of State documents in microfiche arranged by the State Library. Other libraries can subscribe to the microfiche edition for $3,000 per year.

*The Library's 11-million-item collection of manuscripts, maps, atlases, broadsides, musical scores, rare books, prints and war posters provide modern-day scholars windows into New York's past and access to current history as it unfolds. The strength of the Library's Manuscripts and Special Collections, started in 1881, is recognized internationally and attracts scholars from around the world. Here, Patricia Donlon, National Librarian of Ireland, looks at Recens Edita totius Novi America Septentrionali by Matthew Seutter, published in 1673 in Augsburg. It is a map of the northeast U.S. from Maine to Delaware. It is part of the Jansson-Visscher series of some 29 editions of maps of the northeast U.S. dating from 1650-1750. The State Library owns nine of these editions of this rare map. The map includes an early view of Manhattan.*

# ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SOURCES

- **A State agency staff member studying teenage pregnancy needs to know the percentages of births to mothers under 20 years old in each county, and to compare New York's overall teenage pregnancy rate with the rates of other states.**
- **A legislative staff researcher needs 1985 benchmark data, for each county in New York, showing the annual payroll in millions of dollars and the average earnings per employee for those employed in private, nonfarm establishments.**
- **A Columbia County native moving to Providence seeks data on the unemployment and crimes rates there.**
- **A husband and wife team of State workers planning to retire seek data on population, climate, hospitals and nursing homes in southern states.**
- **An investor wants to know where the largest farms in New York State are located.**

State Library users find answers to questions like these by searching a single database on a compact disk at the New York State Library's Electronic Reference Station. Resembling a disk for recorded music, the *County and City Data Book* disk from the U.S. Department of Commerce provides a vast amount of detail about our states, counties, cities and even some smaller places. The user chooses a subject and a place, and instantly obtains the needed information.

The *Data Book* is just one of dozens of compact disk databases now available for searching at the State Library. Collectively the disks contain billions of statistics and other facts, bibliographic citations, abstracts and, in some cases, even full texts. Users can now search patents, trademarks, standards, and specifications, or information related to them on compact disks. (The State Library is a full U.S. Patent Depository Library, so users and Library staff can do complete patent searches using the Patent Office's CASSIS system on disks.)

Other disks cover law, education, science, technology, medicine, toxic substances, business (including addresses for 800,000 companies), public affairs, literature and many other topics. Some disks index newspapers and periodicals. There are bibliographic indexes to U.S. Government Printing Office and National Technical Information Service publications, and United Nations documents. Census Bureau resources include *INFO NEW YORK*, and data from the 1987 economic census.

According to Lee Stanton, Principal Librarian for Reference Services, information encoded on the disks may replace or supplement information in paper abstracts and indexes or online databases available at the Library. He points out that, as in the case of the *County and City Data Book*, the same information may appear in book form, but

## 1990: THE LIBRARY'S YEAR IN NUMBERS

| | |
|---|---|
| 90,883 | reference questions answered |
| 683,857 | items added to the collections: books, maps, journals, gifts and microforms |
| 27,159 | titles cataloged |
| 83,033 | Federal and State documents received in paper form |
| 127,596 | New York State documents distributed to the State Depository libraries |
| 20,967 | journal subscriptions in the computerized serials database |
| 127,513 | journal issues checked in |
| 97,204 | items retrieved from the stacks |
| 39,870 | items circulated |
| 87,526 | interlibrary loan requests processed |
| 146,000 | patrons visited the Library, and 2,970 persons used the Legislative or State Office Campus service points |
| 583,611 | talking books and braille books loaned by the Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped |

the electronic form is quicker and easier to use. It may also be more convenient for further study since, once the user locates the information on the terminal screen, he or she can immediately print a copy at the terminal.

Users may also dial up and search directly the Library of Congress's electronic catalog and special files, including records summarizing nearly two decades of Congressional bills, abstracts of articles on current legislative topics, and copyright information. Also online are the catalogs of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, The State University of New York at Albany, The New York Public Library, and the New York University library collections.

Librarians help users with their searches, and they will search the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) and Research Libraries Information Network national bibliographic databases totaling some 64 million entries. Staff may also do quick ready-reference searches of the more than 900 commercial online databases available on a full spectrum of subjects, when other resources fail. For a small fee, staff will do for any library user the same kinds of searches of those databases they provide to State government offices.

The compact disks and library catalogs are available at work stations grouped around the reference desk, not far from the Library's online catalog stations. The electronic reference resources are heavily used by librarians, other State employees and the public.

## MORE BOOKS, MORE LIBRARY USERS— LIBRARIES INNOVATE FOR NEW NEEDS AND GREATER EFFICIENCY

Each year in the 1980s, public libraries have loaned more books and library materials than in the previous year — total circulation increased from 84 million in 1980 to 106 million in 1989! All types and sizes of libraries — public, school, academic, and special — are more in demand in today's information society. People use their libraries for information, learning and recreation. Some users had very practical objectives, such as preparing for a job interview, or saving money by learning to do their own plumbing repairs, or understanding the differences between fixed and flexible mortgage rates. Others used their libraries to learn more about themselves and other people, reading books about psychology, history and travel. Some used libraries to obtain information they needed for business or professional study — or to learn to read or improve their command of English or a foreign language. While some students used the library for a "term paper," more used it as they pursued some kind of independent learning.

New York's 739 public libraries and their 337 branches are centers for lifelong learning. Other libraries served more than one million college students and faculty, 3.1 million elementary and secondary students, thousands of research and business personnel in corporations and government offices, and thousands of others in correctional facilities.

According to Roberta G. Cade, Director of the Division of Library Development, libraries are more important than ever in today's society: "Ten years ago there were about 30,000 new books published in the United States, this year there are 56,000 — people turn to libraries to find what they need from this mass of books and information." She adds that libraries find library systems and automation efficient ways to help their users get the information they need.

The Division of Library Development plans, develops and coordinates library services and systems statewide. The Division staff provide leadership and support for the State's library development program, administer State and Federal aid and the State regulations governing libraries, and provide technical assistance. Much of this work is with the 23 public library systems, the 46 school library systems and the 9 reference and research library resources systems. These systems and their nearly 5,000 member libraries constitute a network that makes it possible for any resident of

*continued on page 65*

**More Books,** *continued from page 64*

the State to draw upon library resources from anywhere in the State. This year Library Development Division staff:

- Simplified administration of the Federal LSCA grant program
- Reassessed priorities and resources for Division programs with the help of a State University at Albany management consulting team
- Listened to field reactions to a 1989 external study of library systems and evaluated recommendations for improving systems
- Helped public libraries meet proposed minimum standards and become electronic doorway libraries
- Cooperated with the National Center for Educational Statistics in a new public library statistics program
- Assisted in formation of the State's 23rd public library system and assessed public policy issues in "free direct access" requirements for public library systems.

# FEDERAL LIBRARY FUNDS VITAL TO LIBRARIES IN NEW YORK STATE

In 1989, libraries marked the 25th anniversary of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), celebrating the ways in which libraries have improved and extended their services as a result of Federal assistance. Library Development Division staff, with the help of the LSCA Advisory Council, prepared a slide presentation, showing how many library services in New York State have changed as a result of the program. Members of Congress agreed on the importance of the program and in March 1990 extended its authorization to 1994!

This year New York State received $7.5 million in LSCA funds. These include $5.2 million for public library services (Title I), $1 million for public library construction, and $1.3 million for interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing. The Seneca Nation and Akwesasne libraries received funds from Title IV, Indian Library Services, and nine public libraries received grants totaling $225,000 under Title VI, literacy. A complete list of LSCA Title I, II and III grants appears on pages 17-18.

Division staff administer the program with the help of a 12-member advisory council appointed by the Regents. This year staff and the council simplified the way the program works and completed a two-year project for improving evaluation of the LSCA program. As a result, staff eliminated one of three regular reports formerly required each year from the library systems that operate LSCA programs, simplified application and report forms, issued an *LSCA Procedures Manual*, and started using microcomputer-generated forms to simplify work in the library systems and reporting to the U. S. Department of Education.

Staff also developed a new way of submitting the long-range program required by the Federal law, replacing (starting with FY 1991) *Library Service to the People of New York State*, which had been issued each year since 1978. The change should reduce staff work and save printing costs.

After a thorough review of evaluation practices by its subcommittee on program review, the advisory council approved *Guidelines for Evaluation of Community Information and Referral Projects*. The new guidelines emphasize evaluating services in terms of the users' satisfaction and success. They include both quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures; the systems choose the measures most appropriate to their projects.

Staff prepared a policy paper for the Regents regarding the regional libraries and subregional libraries designated by the Library of Congress to provide talking books to people with disabilities.

# HELPING PUBLIC LIBRARIES MEET STANDARDS

When the Regents in January 1989 endorsed 5 of 10 proposed minimum standards for public libraries and approved a three-part plan for improving library services through standards, public library systems and Division staff undertook a series of steps to help libraries move from 1952 to 1990s standards. The Chemung-Southern Tier, Mid-York, and Pioneer systems secured LSCA Title I grants to assist their member libraries meet the proposed "accountability" standards. According to Roberta Cade, the systems are using the LSCA funds to help their 161 member libraries develop policies, bylaws, assessments and service plans required in the proposed standards. They will also help libraries that are not completely accessible to people with disabilities find ways to adapt or provide services to persons with disabilities. The 12 counties served by these 3 systems have substantial rural populations.

According to Sara McCain, Library Development Specialist responsible for LSCA programs, library systems are using both LSCA and State aid funds to help libraries meet other standards. The Regents approved revision of the LSCA Title II program to provide small grants to help libraries provide barrier-free entrances. Systems are also using other LSCA and State regional database program funds to place microcomputers, printers and other equipment in libraries to meet today's information needs. Some of the public library systems have begun to require that members meet selected standards in order to receive system grants; a few are offering incentive grants to help members expand their hours of services.

Libraries are now providing data that give a picture of how they meet the proposed standards. As of December 31, 1989, they reported:

**Hours of service** — 540 libraries (73 percent of all libraries) met the proposed standard for hours of service in December 1989, a significant increase from the 512 that did so in 1988.

**Facilities** — 489 libraries (66 percent) report that their building entrances are accessible to handicapped persons in wheelchairs. The Regents amended the FY 1990 LSCA Title II (Public Library Construction) program to emphasize grants for making libraries accessible. In December 1989, 698 libraries (95 percent) had public rest rooms.

**Equipment** — 23 libraries lacked telephones at the time of the Standards Committee report; only 9 libraries (one percent) lacked them in December 1989.

555 libraries (75 percent) now have microcomputers, a substantial increase from the 432 that had them at the time of the Standards Committee report.

634 libraries (85 percent) have photocopiers.

The Regents 1989 and 1990 library aid proposals included local library services aid to assist libraries to meet standards.

In addition to standards work, Division staff completed a year's assistance to the Phase II Statewide Automation Committee and task forces on telecommunications, computer linkage standards and database criteria. The committee, headed by Dinah Lindauer, former Assistant Director of the Nassau Library system, presented its report, *Technology & Access; the Electronic Doorway Library*, in October 1989. The report recommends that any library, regardless of size, type or location, be able to provide users information electronically from any part of the State.

# COMPREHENSIVE STATE AID PROGRAM SUPPORTS SYSTEMS, SPECIAL NEEDS

Some $65.3 million of the $71.4 million in State aid for libraries supports basic services through three types of systems: public library systems, school library systems, and reference and research library resources systems. These systems make it possible for any library to draw upon collections, expertise and support services from other libraries and from the statewide network of library systems. Another $6.1 million in State aid is earmarked for specific purposes. Division staff consult with systems and libraries and sponsor workshops as part of the program. Among these:

**Conservation/preservation of endangered research materials.** Research libraries estimate that about a quarter of their collections need emergency action. Paper in many 19th and 20th century books and newspapers is so embrittled that the materials must be microfilmed before use. These endangered materials are important to the future of the State and Division staff work with 11 comprehensive research libraries in a coordinated program to save them. Columbia, Cornell, New York and Syracuse Universities, the University of Rochester, the State Library, The New York Public Library, and State University centers at Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook since 1984 have each had systematic preservation program plans. This year they are filing plans for the 1990-94 period.

Several of these libraries are cooperating in preservation of historical photographs, agriculture and rural economy collections, and recorded materials. In addition to $1.3 million in aid to these 11 libraries, Division staff made grants totaling $500,000 to 60 libraries, historical societies, archives and other agencies for microfilming or conserving such collections as:

- the Ross Marvin Arctic Collection at the Chemung Historical Society (microfilming)
- 15th and 16th century portalan charts at the Hispanic Society of America (conservation treatment)
- early school catalogs at the Emma Willard School (microfilming)
- theatrical designs at the Museum of the City of New York (preservation)
- historic New Rochelle photographs at New Rochelle Public Library (reformatting)
- holographic music scores at The Juilliard School (conservation)
- Oswego city directories at SUNY Oswego (microfilming).

In addition, grant funds helped the American Museum of Natural History refurbish the rare book collection used by scholars from throughout the world.

Because preservation requires planning, environmental control and good management, grants included funds for surveys and assistance to 22 institutions embarking on long-range preservation programs. Division staff also organized, in spring 1989, workshops for 110 people willing to work as disaster planning and recovery volunteers. In June, 17 librarians participated in a "disaster recovery drill" at the University of Rochester in which they organized emergency teams to recover books, slides, photographs and documents that had been water soaked for 48 hours. The teams assembled supplies, packed materials and transported them to a freeze facility under emergency conditions. Five of the nine library regions in the State now have some form of regional disaster preparedness program.

Division staff also conducted workshops in Jamestown, Oneonta, Smithtown and Utica to help 121 people from 104 institutions interested in applying for preservation

### 1990: LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT'S YEAR IN NUMBERS

| | |
|---|---|
| 292 | consultant visits and meetings |
| 931 | annual reports reviewed |
| 541 | State aid applications |
| 789 | State aid releases |
| 570 | State aid reports reviewed and approved |
| 75 | special Legislative grants |
| 411 | public librarians certified |
| 10 | conferences, workshops and regional meetings conducted* |

** Fiscal constraints required cancellation of the September 1989 School Library Systems Directors and the Spring 1990 Institution and Outreach Workshops.*

grants. Materials used in these workshops are recognized nationally and are being adapted by other states.

Division staff work with the reference and research library resources systems in the **coordinated collection development** grants program. Public and independent colleges and universities are eligible for funds for the purchase of library materials if they are a member of the system, participate in interlibrary loan and regional collection development programs, and meet legal requirements for maintenance of effort. This year there were 179 applications; of these, 144 were approved, totaling $1.1 million. One college could not receive funds because it had not met maintenance of effort requirements, and seven others received variances because of extenuating circumstances. Aid could not be paid to 34 State University of New York State-operated campuses because the SUNY Central Administration had not requested Division of the Budget allocation for the program. Subsequently, the SUNY State-operated campuses received a special allocation from SUNY funds to compensate, partially, for the loss of two years' grant funds.

Both public library and reference and research library systems completed new four-year plans for their participation in the **regional bibliographic data bases and interlibrary resources sharing program** this year. Over the last six years, the program has added more than 15 million records to the statewide database, supported automation programs, provided greater intersystem access to resources and continuing education. Studies and pilot projects have helped library systems develop electronic mail and online services and make compact disk technology available for staff and public use. Libraries that are members of public library systems, reference and research library resources systems and school library systems can extend additional services to their users as a result of the program.

Two other special aid programs are part of the public library systems aid: aid for **outreach** and support of **Native American libraries**. Each public library system decides how it will use the outreach aid funds: bookmobiles, books-by-mail, service for homeless people, special services to homebound people and older adults, literacy, and job information centers. The Governor Cuomo's Skilled Worker Emeritus groups provided experienced, enthusiastic workers to help in library outreach programs.

Aid supports library services at Seneca Nation Libraries at Irving and near Salamanca and at the Akwesasne Library and Cultural Center at Hogansburg. The Tonawanda Band of Senecas Library at Akron did not apply for aid this year.

## LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

**The New York State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (LBVH) serves adults and children at home, at school and in institutions from Buffalo to Ogdensburg and south to Yonkers. This year, the Library served 982 schools and mailed recorded and braille books to the homes of 797 children. Many of the 24,520 persons who use the LBVH are over age 60 and live at home. Readers borrow the same variety of books as public library users.**

**Many adults and children eligible for LBVH services are unaware of the services. Lions Clubs are helping the Library reach new readers. To reach the estimated 90,000 children and adults who are not yet aware of the service, the New York State Lions' Council of Governors has selected LBVH as one of its statewide projects for 1990-91. According to Jane Somers, LBVH Regional Librarian, volunteers help LBVH supply information and reading pleasure to thousands of persons throughout New York State through talking books and the means to literacy skills through braille books.**

# LIBRARIES SUPPORT EDUCATION GOALS OF GOVERNORS AND THE PRESIDENT

In a February 1989 "education summit" meeting, President Bush and the nation's Governors defined six education goals for the year 2000. Examples of the ways in which libraries of all types in New York State are helping achieve these goals for the year 2000:

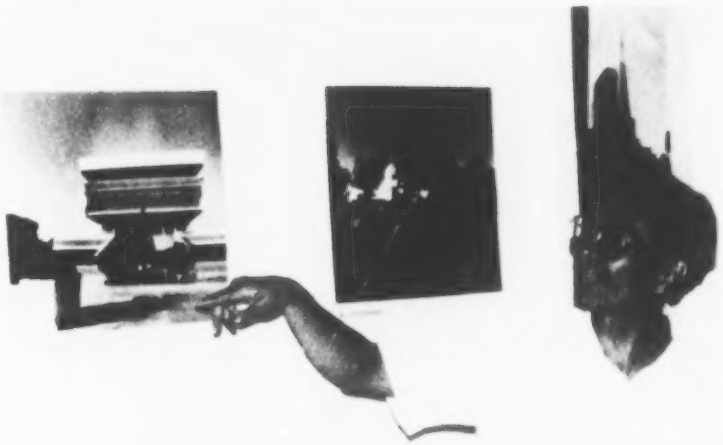
- **Every child will start school ready to learn.** Public libraries in both cities and small communities serve parents and children long before children enter school. This year, in the "Child's Place" at the Brooklyn Public Library, children (along with parents and caregivers) get a good start in learning through story telling and read-aloud activities that develop anticipation and readiness for reading. Crafts, circle games and action songs help parents provide additional, ongoing experiences and motor skills children need for learning to read and write.

  In upstate New York, the Newark Public Library invites children to attend four simulated kindergarten classes in August. The Cooperative Extension Service helped the staff develop the series of three-hour classes that include such experiences as making friends, following directions and taking the bus. Children in the "class" use library materials, learn singing games and rhymes and enjoy books and stories. In Buffalo, the school library system, which arranges interlibrary loans for its member libraries, now also supplies collections of books for pre-Kindergarten programs.

- **The high school graduation rate will increase to 90 percent.** School library media centers help children keep interested, involved and learning, even when they may encounter problems in regular classroom situations. School librarians report that "nonacademic students" often read a full book for the first time because the library provides books that are not on a class reading list but grab their interest: "knife-making, Indians, rock music, baseball, sign language."

  The "City as a School," an alternative high school in Manhattan, meets many students' special needs through interlibrary loans, drawing on special collections on law, debate and citizenship that have been developed as a result of the school library system's cooperative collection development program.

- **American students will leave grades 4, 8 and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for**



*The State Library was on display in the People's Republic of China in mid-1990 when the Cultural Park in Canton hosted a photographic exhibit, "Wandering about America 100 Days." The photographs were taken by Chunxiao Li, Yangcheng Evening News journalist and author, and Xiaoxian Yuan, Editor-in-Chief of the Information News on Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Ms. Grace Yakel, Chief of the State Library's Gift and Exchange unit, helped Ms. Li and Mr. Yuan plan their visit to Albany. The exhibit in Canton was sponsored by the newspapers, the Canton Association of Photographers and Chinese industry organizations.*



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.** Sustained success in school often is based upon first experiences. Beatrice Angus, The Madison Oneida School Library System director says students of all ages use a microfiche catalog "as a matter of course when researching for projects." Among her examples: A first-grade boy who learned to use the system, obtained books on football through interlibrary loan and worked with his father on an enrichment program.

When seniors in the Morrisville Central School took a course, "Participation in Government," their case study was libraries and library systems, learning how they operate and are funded. Their study included a field trip to the State Capitol to discuss library services and funding with legislators.

Research shows that children who read widely in the summer do well in school in the fall. Twenty-one public library systems help their member libraries operate summer reading programs. In 1991 and 1992, the Division of Library Development will provide materials and expertise to help systems expand reading programs.

- **U.S. students will be the first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.** Petal Haynes, a Stuyvesant High School senior in Manhattan and a Westinghouse Scholarship winner, joined the school's "library squad" when she was a sophomore. She regularly uses the library and interlibrary loan for her science projects. For her Westinghouse project she studied nursing homes and their effect on patients, using information her system helped her get from college and special libraries.

  Like Petal, students in schools of all sizes find that much study in math or science requires information that the school library media specialist obtains from outside sources. This year, the 46 school library systems provided 4,008 database searches and 480,359 interlibrary loans.

- **Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.** Public libraries help adults get the information they need and help people to read. Often students in library-based literacy and writing classes focus on such specific goals as getting a driver's license or passing an examination for bus driver or paraprofessional homecare worker. The Queens Library workshops for immigrants who are learning to live in a new country focus on such practical matters as how to shop, deal with a landlord, get a job or start a business. The workshops also help newcomers learn about taxes, legal procedures and American society. Public libraries of all sizes provide literacy services, often with the help of their public library system outreach program. The Seneca Nation library in western New York works with both the Seneca Nation and Cattaraugus County Adult Education Programs in training programs and other services for new readers.

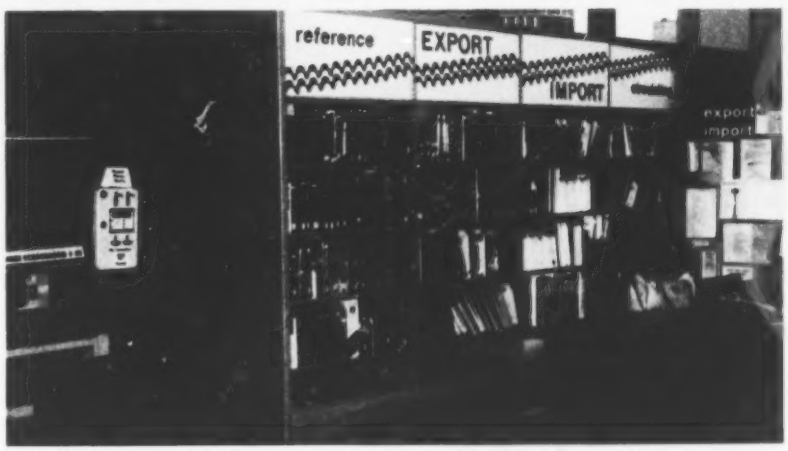
- **Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.** Libraries provide both teachers and administrators with authoritative research results of "what works" in drug education and control. Library systems can access the State Library's database of research on urban education compiled by the Teachers College Educational Research Information Center clearinghouse. Libraries in colleges and universities support research, teacher education and in-service education for teachers and administrators.

  The New York State Task Force on Integrated Projects for Youth and Chemical Dependency turned to the Mid-Hudson Library System for educational and information materials. The Task Force asked the system to mount the SAVE (Substance Abuse Prevention Through Video Education) program. The system, known for its audiovisual services and its leadership in developing a statewide database on film and video resources, with SAVE support, makes videos available to individuals, schools and organizations and provides other services. It will publish a catalog of nearly 2,000 video titles owned by libraries and such other organizations as mental health groups, hospitals and substance abuse councils.

# RESEARCH RESIDENTS

Maureen Montgomery, Professor of History at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, is doing research at the State Library for her study of 19th century leisure class women in New York State.

Dr. Montgomery is one of five scholars awarded 1990 New York State Library research residencies. The annual Research Residency awards were established in 1986 to support individual scholarship and to promote the use of the State Library's collections in scholarly research. Since then, 14 scholars have used the Library's collections to produce such diverse publications as *Dutch Trade and Ceramics in America in the Seventeenth Century* and *Clovernook Sketches and Other Stories, A Compilation of the Works of Alice Cary*.




*New York's gross product is ninth in world, exceeded only by those of the US, the USSR, Japan, West Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom and California. Business in New York operates in a global economy and requires information often provided by libraries. The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Export-Import Collection serves both American and Canadian business men and women. Reference and research library resources systems also provide information services which public, academic, special and other libraries use to serve business information needs.*

The other 1990 research residents are:

- Gail E. H. Evans, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is tracing the development of hydroelectric power at Niagara Falls.
- Mary Anne Devane, The University at Albany, is preparing a catalog of Irish-American research materials.
- Margaret Orelup, University of Massachusetts, is studying the consumer economy and rural culture in Western New York.
- James D. Whitaker, historic researcher, is studying broom corn culture and broom manufacturing in New York State.

During the one-year residency, the scholars have access to the collections and services of the State Library and the support of subject specialists on the Library's staff. Their special research privileges include borrowing privileges and access to the reference, database, photoduplication and interlibrary loan services of the State Library.

Two 1989 research residents were particularly interested in Library and State Archives collections and the resources of the New Netherland Project. Ronald W. Howard, Associate Professor of History, Mississippi College, studied patterns of childrearing in colonial New York, 1624-1776, and William A. Starna, professor, Department of Anthropology at the State University of New York College at Oneonta, did research on the history and development of Indian law in New York State.

Applications for Research Residency awards are filed in each December. Five awards are available each year. Research Residents are expected to complete their research at the New York State Library by the following December. . The Library has a special interest in supporting research and publications relating to the history, culture, environment and public policy of New York State.

# NEW YORK PARTICIPATES IN FEDERAL LIBRARY DATA PROGRAM

The Division of Library Development is cooperating with the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) in a new Federal-State cooperative program for public library statistics. Congress authorized the new program in 1988, and all 50 states participated in the 1989 program. Each state library agency asked public libraries to report key data on their annual public library report form using NCES definitions. The 50 states use the same microcomputer program to record the data and send the data on disk to the NCES. NCES aggregates, analyzes and publishes national summaries on paper and on computer disks. The 1989 data show how New York ranks among the 50 states in several key factors. In 1989, New York's libraries:

- Owned more than a 10th of all the public library books in the nation: 62.8 million of the 600.3 million in the 50 states. But New York ranks 12th among the states in per capita book and serial holdings (3.58). Massachusetts has 4.59 books per capita.
- Answered 17.7 million reference questions. Only California (37.3 million) answered more. Per capita, New York ranked 12th among the states in reference questions answered.
- Loaned 108.8 million items, or 6.19 per capita. The nation's libraries loaned more than 1.3 billion items, or 5.6 per capita.
- Led the nation in using interlibrary loan. They borrowed nearly a million books on interlibrary loan for their users, or 56.68 per thousand population. This was 21 percent of the 4.7 million books borrowed nationwide.
- Were among the five states with the largest per capita expenditure for public libraries: New York $29.48, Alaska $23.64, Ohio $23.34, Connecticut $22.10, and New Jersey $21.16. However, 416 of New York's public libraries expended less than the national per capita average of $17.16.

New York's libraries reported receiving $61 million in State funds, representing 11.4 percent of their total income; 14 other states reported larger percentages of state support. New York libraries reported their 1989 data early in 1990, and NCES will publish the 1989 report early in 1991.

## THE NEWEST PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

By the end of the year, ready for approval in April 1990, Library Development Division staff completed work with committees representing 60 member libraries on a reconfiguration of the Pioneer Library System. The Monroe County Library System now constitutes a system separate from the "new" Pioneer Library System, chartered in 1990 to serve 41 libraries in Livingston, Ontario, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

According to Patricia Mallon, Library Development Specialist in the Division, Monroe County has grown and changed considerably since it was chartered in 1952, and the Rochester and Monroe County libraries supported the 41 libraries when they voted to establish a new system in November 1989.

The Wayne-Ontario and Livingston-Wyoming Library Systems are combining to form the new system with codirectors and a single board of trustees.

The Geneva Free Library is the central library for the new system and expects automation to be a key to successful central library service. The central library is cooperating with Hobart and William Smith Colleges to provide access to bibliographic databases, CD-ROM reference products and the colleges' circulation and bibliographic systems. The Geneva Free Library has also installed an 800 phone number for libraries to call for reference assistance. The member libraries are acquiring facsimile machines for fast transmission of urgently needed information materials.

The city of Geneva is strengthening the Geneva Free Library by increasing its operating funds by 30 percent and by planning an addition to the Greek revival building. The expansion will triple the library's size, be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities and hold a collection of over 120,000 volumes. The library has begun a capital campaign to raise the $2.4 million needed to build.

# LIBRARIES HELP LITERACY

When the United Nations designated 1990 as "International Literacy Year," libraries were helped in creating greater public recognition of the importance of literacy in today's world. Libraries in New York State are helping thousands of people learn to read and thousands more use their newly acquired reading skills.

The Division of Library Development this year is helping public library systems work with community organizations, literacy volunteer groups, schools, BOCES and adult education agencies, public television stations and business groups. The Division granted $435,123 in FY 1991 LSCA Title I funds to provide materials, space and other support for literacy programs, and to help students become lifelong learners and library users. Literacy programs supported by the State Education Department now are required to introduce students to public libraries and help them get library cards.

Carol Sheffer, Library Development Specialist and a member of the State Literacy Council, points out that literacy is important to the State's social services and economic development programs. "Workers who can read are more productive, are able to involve themselves in problem-solving, waste less material and have the self-esteem essential in the workplace," she says. Sheffer also emphasizes that parents and others responsible for children can give their children a better start in life if they can read. "Parents know that, and often enroll in a reading program because they want to read to their children. That is why libraries emphasize family literacy programs," she added.

Libraries of all sizes mount literacy programs today. In the Queens Borough Public Library, 900 students receive library instruction at their local library. Computers in branches assist small groups of persons from other countries practice English conversational skills.

Across the State, in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties, library literacy services are on a different scale but are just as important. This year, 20 new tutors began teaching adult learners at the Westfield Public Library. Sheffer points out that people in this community of 5,054 people near Lake Erie are part of a global economy in which literacy is essential. The Olean Public Library, which is recognized throughout the State for its effective literacy and education information center programs, trained six Native Americans as tutors to help their neighbors at the Seneca Nation Reservation.

Richard C. Wade, Chair of the Governor's Commission on Libraries, pointed out that libraries are serving new audiences; "The last quarter century has witnessed a stream of immigration that approximates the numbers of nearly a century ago. These newcomers come from lands with different cultures, different languages and different skills." For many, including immigrants who do not know English and may be illiterate in their native language, library-based literacy programs open doors in their new land. Even immigrants who come from highly skilled positions in their own land must often study English to get employment in New York State. Libraries cooperate with other educational institutions in meeting the needs of people for whom English is a second language.

In 1991, Ms. Sheffer will direct a project funded by the U.S. Department of Education to develop an evaluation model for library-based literacy projects.

## GREAT ANNIVERSARIES!

This year marks the centennial of the New York Library Association. The Association was organized at a meeting in the State Capitol in 1890 under the leadership of the Chancellor of the Board of Regents, State Librarian Melvil Dewey, and some 30 other leading educators and librarians. To mark the 100 years of ensuing service from the Association and New York's libraries, the Winter 1990 issue of *The Bookmark*, published by the State Library, included 13 centennial articles and a chronology of events in the history of the Association and in the history of American libraries and the New York State Library. Among the State Library "firsts" in the 1890s were:

1890 - Legislative Reference service begins, earliest known such service in the U.S.

1893 - First traveling library service in the nation

1894 - Electricity lights the State Library for the first time, so that the Library can remain open in evenings

1898 - The Library begins loaning braille books.

## STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS UNDERWRITE SERVICES

In 1989-90, the State expended $71.4 million in State aid for libraries. State support of the Library and Library Development Division totaled $8.4 million.

The FY 1990 Federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) allocation to New York State for Title I (public library services) was $5,248,062, for Title II (public library construction) $1,050,850, and for Title III (interlibrary cooperation) $1,263,684. Sixty percent of the Federal funds were expended in grants to library systems for local and regional services and for public library construction. Thirty-five percent supported such statewide services as the library for the blind, interlibrary loan and library development services. Five percent was expended for administration.

The staff continued to seek and obtain grants to support priorities for preservation of newspapers and other endangered materials, cataloging of special collections, and information services. These included $613,000 for five projects from the National Endowment for the Humanities, $27,291 from the Mellon Foundation, and $96,297 from Title II-C of the Higher Education. The Library also received $44,713 for preservation of early agricultural documents as part of State Coordinated Preservation project administered by Cornell University, and $245,000 from other units of the Education Department to provide Educational Programs Information Services.

In addition to the grants received this year, the Library's New Netherland Project remains jointly funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and private contributions. The Library Development Division continued its statewide conservation/preservation program under a multiyear grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

State and Federal funds supported a total staff of 231 on March 31, 1990.

### NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY EXPENDITURES

April 1, 1989 - March 31, 1990

| | State | Federal* |
|---|---|---|
| State Library Operations (except Acquisitions) | $5,065,232 | $1,916,678 |
| Library Acquisitions | 2,587,377 | 0 |
| Library Development Division Operations | 544,836 | 768,898 |
| NYSILL | 234,521 | 0 |
| **Total Services** | **$8,431,966** | **$2,685,576** |

**Data based on expenditures in Federal FY1989*

# OTHER STATE AID PAYMENTS

**April 1, 1989 - March 31, 1990**

| | |
|---|---|
| Reference and Research Library Resources Systems | $3,002,389 |
| School Library Systems | 5,035,558 |
| Public Library Systems/Local Correctional Institutional Service | 175,000 |
| Public Library Systems for State Correctional Institution Service | 407,000 |
| The New York Public Library Service to Blind and Handicapped Readers | 739,200 |
| The New York Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture | 863,000 |
| Indian Library Grants | 269,251 |
| Regional Database Program (Region/Grant) | 3,045,000 |
| Capital District ($280,000); Central New York ($305,000); Long Island ($310,000); METRO ($483,750); North Country $275,500); Rochester ($260,000); South Central ($361,250); Southeastern ($295,000); Western ($392,500); Public Library System Competitive Grants ($100,000) | |
| Coordinated Academic Collection Development | 1,061,410 |
| New York Academy of Medicine (Coupons) | 460,000 |
| Hospital Library Program | 1,266,000 |
| Conservation/Preservation | 1,750,000 |
| Columbia University, Cornell University, New York University, University of Rochester, Syracuse University, The Research Libraries of The New York Public Library, and the four State University Centers at Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook ($90,000 each)* | |
| Special Legislative Projects (see attached list) | 1,413,125 |
| **Total** | **$19,486,933** |

** Does not include a similar sum for the New York State Library.*

# PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS[a] 1989-90 STATE AID PAYMENTS

| Library System | System and Central Library | Local Library Incentive Aid | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brooklyn | $4,471,880 | $985,307 | $5,457,187 |
| Buffalo-Erie | 2,036,381 | 421,647 | 2,458,028 |
| Chautauqua-Cattaraugus | 839,062 | 91,117 | 930,179 |
| Chemung-Southern Tier | 977,122 | 110,726 | 1,087,848 |
| Clinton-Essex-Franklin | 831,986 | 56,022 | 888,008 |
| Finger Lakes | 934,462 | 98,585 | 1,033,047 |
| Four County | 1,093,028 | 147,695 | 1,240,723 |
| Mid-Hudson | 1,385,236 | 178,739 | 1,563,975 |
| Mid-York | 1,038,433 | 102,287 | 1,140,720 |
| Mohawk Valley | 844,625 | 133,446 | 978,071 |
| Nassau | 2,533,198 | 677,482 | 3,210,680 |
| New York | 11,046,224 | 1,252,030 | 12,298,254 |
| Nioga | 848,325 | 145,200 | 993,525 |
| North Country | 1,169,023 | 145,570 | 1,314,593 |
| Onondaga | 988,401 | 160,930 | 1,149,331 |
| Pioneer | 2,163,346 | 456,773 | 2,620,119 |
| Queens | 3,515,700 | 1,003,315 | 4,519,015 |
| Ramapo Catskill | 1,423,149 | 233,089 | 1,656,238 |
| Southern Adirondack | 946,831 | 79,324 | 1,026,155 |
| Suffolk | 2,461,965 | 578,071 | 3,040,036 |
| Upper Hudson | 993,785 | 201,221 | 1,195,006 |
| Westchester | 1,694,970 | 434,303 | 2,129,273 |
| **Total** | **$44,237,173** | **$7,692,879** | **$51,930,052** |

[a] *Does not include Local Correctional Institution Services, State Correctional Institution Services, The New York Public Library — Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Automation grants.*

# LIBRARY SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION ACT GRANTS TITLE I — PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM SERVICES*

| | |
|---|---|
| **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| The Child's Place Program | $137,792 |
| Education/Job Information Center Program | 64,524 |
| Words and Memories: A Read-A-Loud Program for Older Adults | 9,825 |
| **BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY** | |
| Project LEAP | 94,500 |
| Job/Education Information Center | 32,332 |
| Literacy Program | 34,686 |
| **CHAUTAUQUA-CATTARAUGUS LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Literacy Volunteer Coordination | 20,565 |
| English as a Second Language | 10,800 |
| Update Radio Reading Service | 12,920 |
| **CHEMUNG-SOUTHERN TIER LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Back to the Library | 20,200 |
| Books Plus for Life Skills | 10,100 |
| Library Planning and Managing: Guidance on Tape | 5,050 |
| **CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Job Information Center | 6,818 |
| Beginning With Books | 10,908 |
| Reading Partners for Older Adults | 3,535 |
| Literacy Volunteers | 2,273 |
| **FINGER LAKES LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Public Library as an Intergenerational Resource | 11,500 |
| **FOUR COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Job and Citizen Information Centers | 10,000 |
| Books on Cassette for the Elderly | 10,000 |
| Parent-Toddler Mini Resource Centers | 11,317 |
| **MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Literacy Project | 20,133 |
| Education/Job Information Center Program | 49,850 |
| **MID-YORK LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Adult Learning Opportunities Program | 36,421 |
| Literacy Volunteers of the Mohawk Valley Project | 16,764 |
| Standards Grant for Trustees | 2,878 |
| Local Programming Kits for the Elderly | 2,020 |
| **MOHAWK VALLEY LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Education and Job Information Centers | 35,451 |
| Outreach to the Elderly | 14,292 |
| Hispanic Outreach | 10,100 |
| **NASSAU LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Adult Independent Learner/Job Information Center | 67,670 |
| English for New Americans | 13,635 |
| "Lively Minds" The Traveling Library Learning Program | 13,635 |
| Babywise26,765 | |
| **THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY** | |
| Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped | 120,998 |
| Outreach | 201,764 |
| English as a Second Language | 18,389 |
| Learners Advisory Service and Job Information Center Project | 72,599 |
| Literacy Project | 59,352 |
| Cooperative Database and Shared Cataloging | 101,000 |
| **NIOGA LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Read to Me | 20,200 |
| Adult Literacy Training | 12,726 |
| Inductive Loop Installation | 3,030 |
| **NORTH COUNTRY LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Education/Job Information Center | 36,057 |
| Outreach Service to the Elderly | 10,100 |
| Onondaga County Public Library Literacy Project | 27,459 |
| Service to Older Adults | 19,958 |
| "Helping Hand": Deaf Awareness | 8,296 |
| Conversational English | 11,000 |
| **PIONEER LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Adult Independent Learner/Job Information Center | 20,277 |
| Informational Materials Packets Assisting Caregivers of the Elderly (IMPAC) | 25,000 |
| Putting the Strategic Planning Process to Work | 3,500 |
| **QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY** | |
| Adult Literacy Program | 11,700 |
| Latchkey Enrichment Project | 50,000 |
| South Queens Library Development Project | 50,000 |
| **RAMAPO CATSKILL LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Radio Vision | 25,643 |
| Job Information Center/Adult Learner | 19,089 |
| Service to Seniors/Caregivers Project | 5,050 |
| **SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Elderly Services | 35,350 |
| Family Reading Program | 9,999 |
| Job Information Center/Adult Independent Learner | 20,200 |
| **SUFFOLK COOPERATIVE LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Literacy Project | 20,509 |
| Limited English-Speaking Project | 14,477 |
| Job and Community Information | 35,350 |
| **UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| Outreach Services to the Disadvantaged | 23,180 |
| Limited English-Speaking | 17,953 |
| Literacy Services to Adults | 17,726 |
| **WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM** | |
| English Classes for New Americans | 14,342 |
| Literacy Volunteers | 10,908 |
| Job Information Centers | 17,271 |
| Services to the Elderly | 8,080 |
| **TOTAL** | **$2,007,791** |

*approved through March 5, 1990

**Institutions**

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**
Introduction to Library Resources for Hispanic Offenders Project 27,900

**DIVISION FOR YOUTH**
Storyteller 27,120

**OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH**
MATCH Program 27,500

**TOTAL** **$82,520**

**Strengthening Major Urban Resource Libraries**

**BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Materials on art, music, history, travel and biography, languages, literature, science, industry, social sciences, youth services, children's books, and education/job information, as well as documentaries on videocassettes and teaching films. 183,575

**BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Materials on computers, physics, chemistry, engineering, technology, foundations, business directories, and literary criticism as well as compact disks. 33,518

**THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Information on special subjects in formats such as books, microforms, films, recordings, audio and video cassettes and instructional soft ware. 243,502

**ONONDAGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Materials on business, education, travel, electronics, sales management and music, as well as microfilmed local history materials. 21,521

**QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Materials on art, music, languages, science and technology, and social sciences in a variety of formats. The project will also provide for preservation of historical materials. 154,385

**ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Materials on art, business, education, history, literary criticism, reference and science and technology, as well as microfilms of periodicals and local history materials. 27,234

**YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Specialized reference materials in business, finance, technology and economics. 23,725

**TOTAL** **$687,460**

**TITLE I TOTAL** **$2,777,771**

# TITLE III — INTERLIBRARY COOPERATION AND RESOURCE SHARING

**CAPITAL DISTRICT LIBRARY COUNCIL**
Regional CD-ROM Expansion $ 40,000
1990 Recon 25,000

**CENTRAL NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL**
Retrospective Conversion 35,350

**CHEMUNG-SOUTHERN TIER LIBRARY SYSTEM**
*Spectrum* Project 14,292

**MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM**
*NYLINE* Project 45,000

**NEW YORK METROPOLITAN REFERENCE & RESEARCH LIBRARY AGENCY (METRO)**
Union List of Serials Project 80,000
Retrospective Conversion 65,000

**NORTH COUNTRY REFERENCE AND RESEARCH RESOURCES COUNCIL**
Medical Information Access 16,500
Retroconversion Project 24,800

**ROCHESTER REGIONAL LIBRARY COUNCIL**
Retrospective Conversion of Monographs 55,200
Telefacsimile Access: Library Resources on the Move 17,310

**SOUTH CENTRAL LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL**
Retrospective Conversion of Large Regional Collections 50,000

**SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL**
Retrospective Conversion 30,200
CD-ROM Public Access Catalog 30,200

**WESTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL**
Retrospective Conversion 30,300
Access Via Telefacsimile 13,054

**TOTAL** **$572,206**

**TITLE III TOTAL** **$572,206**

**TITLES I AND III GRAND TOTAL** **$3,349,977**

# SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE GRANTS 1989–90

| NAME | CITY | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|
| Apalachin Library, Friends of | Appalachin | $35,000 |
| Baldwin Public Library | Baldwin | 7,000 |
| Bayville Free Library | Bayville | 28,000 |
| Howland Public Library | Beacon | 25,000 |
| Bellmore Memorial Library | Bellmore | 5,000 |
| Suffolk Cooperative Library System | Bellport | 10,000 |
| Broome County Public Library | Binghamton | 20,000 |
| Brookhaven Free Library | Brookhaven | 14,000 |
| Buffalo & Erie County Public Lib. | Buffalo | 11,000 |
| Orchard Park Public Library | Buffalo | 5,000 |
| Canastota Public Library | Canastota | 15,000 |
| Middle Country Public Library | Centereach | 15,000 |
| Chemung-Southern Tier Library Syst. | Corning | 49,000 |
| Chemung-Southern Tier Library Syst. | Corning | 15,000 |
| Chemung-Southern Tier Library Syst. | Corning | 19,500 |
| Queens Borough Public Library | Corona | 59,000 |
| Cragsmoor Free Library | Cragsmoor | 4,000 |
| Hammond Library of Crown Point | Crown Point | 10,000 |
| Eden Free Library | Eden | 27,190 |
| Farmingdale Public Library | Farmingdale | 2,350 |
| Floral Park Public Library | Floral Park | 15,000 |
| Floral Park Public Library | Floral Park | 17,545 |
| Franklin Square Public Library | Franklin Square | 10,000 |
| Alice & Hamilton Fish Library | Garrison-on-Hudson | 5,000 |
| Crandall Library | Glens Falls | 10,000 |
| Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Lib. | Hastings-on-Hudson | 7,500 |
| Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library | Hewlett | 4,000 |
| Queens Borough Public Library | Jamaica | 55,000 |
| Queens Borough Public Library | Jamaica | 50,000 |
| Peninsula Public Library | Lawrence | 5,000 |
| Island Trees Public Library | Levittown | 15,000 |
| Nioga Library System | Lockport | 11,000 |
| Lockport Public Library | Lockport | 7,500 |
| Nioga Library System | Lockport | 17,000 |
| Nioga Library System | Lockport | 20,000 |
| Nioga Library System | Lockport | 15,000 |
| Locust Valley Library | Locust Valley | 15,000 |
| Nassau Library System | Long Beach | 50,000 |
| Malverne, Incorporated Village of | Malverne | 8,000 |
| Massapequa Public Library | Massapequa | 5,000 |
| Merrick Library | Merrick | 7,500 |
| Nanuet Public Library | Nanuet | 10,000 |
| New York Public Library | New York | 50,000 |
| New York Public Library | New York | 2,000 |
| Puerto Rican Cultural Heritage Lib. | New York | 187,000 |
| Newark Public Library | Newark | 30,000 |
| North Babylon Public Library | North Babylon | 4,340 |
| North Bellmore Public Library | North Bellmore | 5,000 |
| Temple Avodah of Oceanside | Oceanside | 15,000 |
| Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Lib. | Oyster Bay | 20,000 |
| Suffolk BOCES 2-School Lib. System | Patchogue | 25,000 |
| Plainview-Old Bethpage Public Lib. | Plainview | 10,000 |
| Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library | Plattsburgh | 25,000 |
| Potsdam Public Library | Potsdam | 5,000 |
| Riverhead Free Library | Riverhead | 5,000 |
| Rochester Public Library-Friends | Rochester | 3,500 |
| Rockville Centre Public Library | Rockville Centre | 10,000 |
| A. E. Diver Memorial Library | Schagticoke | 5,000 |
| Scottsville Free Library | Scottsville | 13,000 |
| Seaford Public Library | Seaford | 5,000 |
| Rockland Ctr. for Holocaust Studies | Spring Valley | 10,000 |
| Long Island Lib. Resources Council | Stony Brook | 50,000 |
| Suffern Free Library | Suffern | 20,000 |
| Onondaga Free Library | Syracuse | 7,000 |
| Warner Library | Tarrytown | 5,000 |
| Warner Library | Tarrytown | 7,500 |
| Troy Public Library | Troy | 25,000 |
| Mid-York Library System | Utica | 68,000 |
| Valley Cottage Free Library | Valley Cottage | 8,000 |
| Henry Waldinger Memorial Library | Valley Stream | 6,500 |
| Wantagh Public Library | Wantagh | 5,000 |
| North Country Library System | Watertown | 22,000 |
| Williston Park Public Library | Williston Park | 9,200 |
| Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Lib. | Woodbury | 10,000 |
| Linda Pinsky Memorial Library | Woodmere | 4,000 |
| **Total** | | **$1,413,125** |



81

## DIRECTORY
(area code 518)

| | |
|---|---|
| State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries | |
| *Joseph F. Shubert* | 474-5930 |
| Director of the State Library | |
| *Jerome Yavarkovsky* | 473-1189 |
| Director of Library Development | |
| *Roberta G. Cade* | 474-7196 |
| Library Administration Officer | |
| *GladysAnn Wells* | 474-4660 |
| Principal Librarian, Collection Acquisition and Processing | |
| *Elizabeth Lane* | |
| *Darrell Welch* (Acting through April 1989) | 474-5946 |
| Principal Librarian, Collection Management/Network Services | |
| *J. Van der Veer Judd* | 474-5955 |
| Principal Librarian, Legislative and Governmental Services | |
| *Mary Redmond* | 474-3940 |
| Principal Librarian, Reference Services | |
| *Lee Stanton* | 474-2274 |

**Other Frequently Needed Numbers**

| | |
|---|---|
| Reference Desk | **473-INFO** |
| | (473-4636) |
| Manuscripts and Special Collections Reference Desk | 474-6282 |
| Legislative Service Point | 432-2649 |
| EPSIS | 474-3639 |
| Documents/Gift and Exchange | 474-7492 |
| Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped | 474-5935 |
| New Netherland Project | 474-6067 |

## *Inside....*


- ❑ Maximizing Resources: Information for Decisions
- ❑ Electronic Information Sources
- ❑ More Books, More Library Users, Libraries Innovate
- ❑ Federal Funds Vital to Libraries in New York State
- ❑ Helping Public Libraries Meet Standards
- ❑ Comprehensive State Aid Program Supports Systems, Special Needs
- ❑ Libraries Support Education Goals
- ❑ Libraries Help Literacy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## 1990: International Literacy Year

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Art: The drawing on pages 00 and the decoration or logo on each page of this issue of *The Bookmark* are by author and illustrator Bruce Degen. Mr. Degen is a former art teacher in New York City high schools and the author and illustrator of many books for children. He has collaborated with Joanna Cole on the popular "Magic School Bus" titles. In the work for this issue of *The Bookmark*, Mr. Degen conveys an awareness of events and images to which he reacted strongly as a child.

Credits: In addition to others credited elsewhere in this issue, the following persons helped make this issue possible: Christine Hodor, Manuscripts Control, and Andrew Mace, Production Assistant.